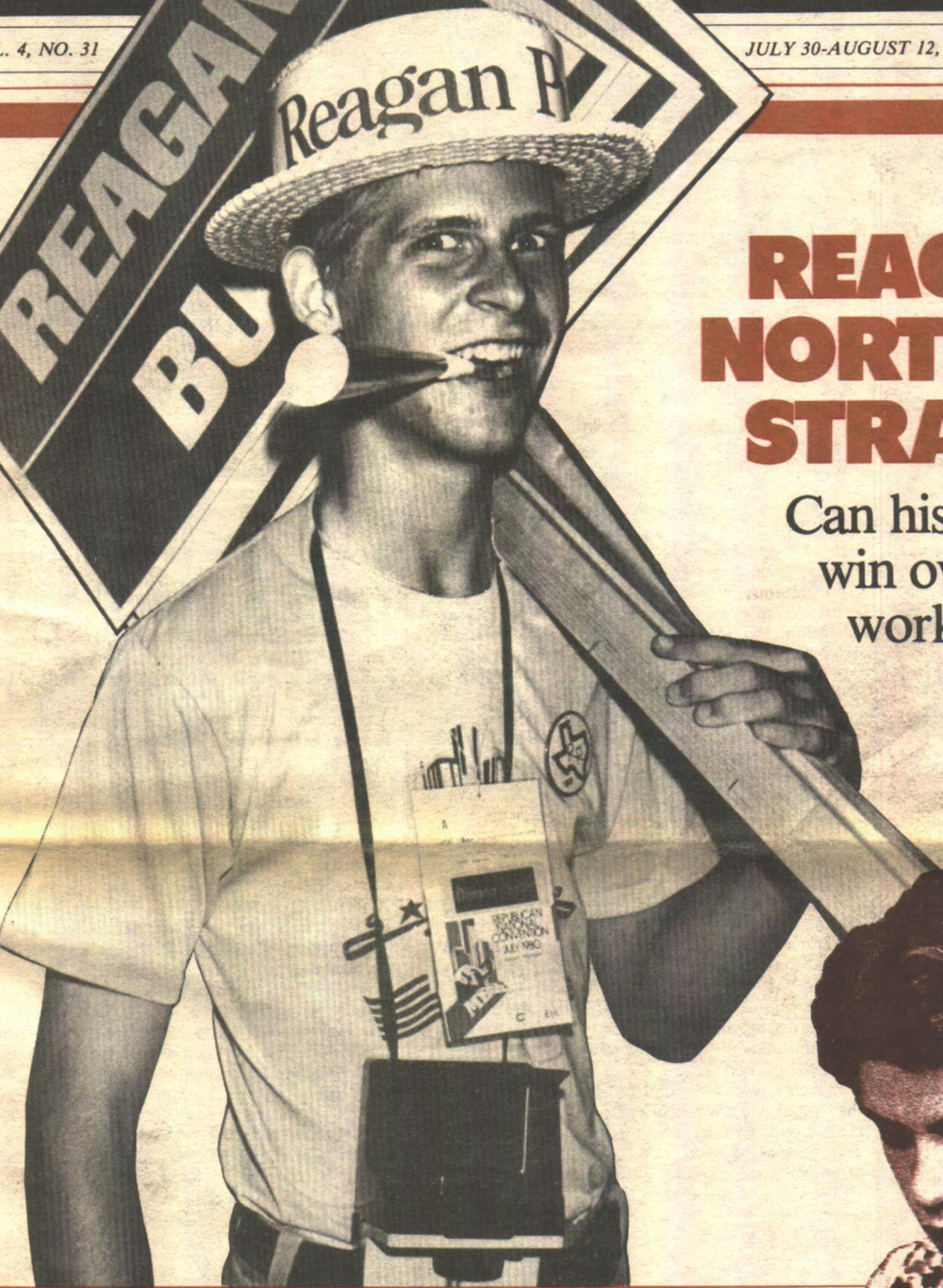


REAGAN'S NORTHERN STRATEGY

Can his Republicans
win over blue collar
workers and blacks?



Steve Kagan

DIANA JOHNSTONE ON WOMEN WORKERS IN FRANCE



Didier Mallac

THE INSIDE STORY



Left journalist Jim Hightower, who recently won 48 percent of the vote for the Texas Railroad Commission.

Can we save America ...or only \$36 a year?

By David Moberg

In the waning days of July, left political activists were schooling themselves in a bitter new regimen of the Two R's—Reagan and Recession.

Both the vitality of the right wing and its success in creating a popular, mass movement in the decade that was supposed to see the rise of an anti-corporate, populist upsurge and the economic problems of corporate disinvestment and dislocation that have traumatized so many localities sorely challenge the people who have been trying to build a new, popular and victorious left starting from small communities and working up the scale of power.

Family. Work. Neighborhood. Peace. Freedom. "Those are our issues," Gar Alperovitz, co-director of the National Center for Economic Alternatives, told the 500-plus left lobbyists, community organizers and government office-holders who gathered in Pittsburgh July 18-20 for the Sixth Conference on Alternative State and Local Policy.

Especially if you add on a few other important items, like equity, democracy, ecological sanity and cooperation. But those were the catchwords as well of Ronald Reagan, who also invoked FDR while attacking Carter from both his left (unemployment and a faltering economy) and his right (moral decay and weakness before the Russkies).

Many of the activists at the conference had seen bank redlining destroy neighborhoods. They had fought as conglomerate profit-seeking closed down factories and ended the work of a lifetime for thousands. They had counseled battered women from families subjected to the stress of overwork, unemployment or dismal workplaces. They had come into politics fighting against a war in Vietnam supported by Democratic and Republican establishments and the nation's business leaders. They had worked for civil rights for blacks and women that would have meant freedom from the discriminatory chains of both law and economics in the U.S. But the right somehow captured those words, even as its policies—and those of Carter as well—undermine those virtues.

"Why is the right developing a mass base so rapidly and what does that mean for us strategically?" Midwest Academy organizing teacher Steve Max added. Although an anti-corporate movement has emerged, the biggest popular reaction to declining living standards in the past decade has taken on an anti-government tone. And more government action is the heart of the left program. Anti-government sentiment is a hallowed tradition in America, Max noted. Beyond that, he argued, the left and liberal movements of the '60s were cut off from "middle America" at a time when economic decline started, and people could

blame civil rights and anti-poverty programs for their troubles. Corporations also appear to provide jobs (while really trying to eliminate them) and their leaders are not so visible or accountable.

The right wing also has an emotionally compelling vision. "The right-wing vision of the future is the only one tested by time," Max quipped, "because it is an idealized remembrance of the past.... They offer infancy as a solution for capitalism's old age." Their appeal to competitive capitalism seems as all-American as baseball, but unlike baseball, the economic losers don't return next season and the winners field extra players.

The right's vision may be screwball antiquarianism but, Max said, "the lack of culturally rooted vision of the future puts our movement at a disadvantage." After the '60s tumult, when vision was all and program nothing, the activists of the '70s on the left often became mired in technocratic solutions that were "too short-run, too sanitary," Max said. "We talk about declining block rates, investment and disinvestment. We have programs that save people \$36 a year." Meanwhile, the right promises the rebirth of America.

If you talk about specific programs, such as aid to cities, environmental protection, wage-price controls, gasoline rationing instead of higher prices, then the people lean left, Alperovitz argued. That reflects a long-standing split in the American political psyche, especially among blue-collar workers, between conservative ideological beliefs, such as support for private enterprise, and more liberal or left "operational," or programmatic, ideas.

Making plans.

The emotional pulling power is with ideology much of the time. Now when the economic system is floundering and liberal nostrums of the past seem to have no effect, the left has an opportunity to promote many radical programs as simple common sense, but it has difficulty putting them together under any convincing banner, whether democratic socialism, economic democracy, bucking the corporations or whatever. Neither the inflation of recent years nor the special unemployment created by business jettisoning various industries or regions can be tamed without comprehensive economic planning, Alperovitz argued. Tax problems also can only be addressed by planning, not by Proposition 13s or massive Reagan-style tax cuts.

Planning increasingly is on the agenda and the left is beginning to develop a piecemeal approach. It includes plant-closing legislation at the state and federal level, the national coop bank and local producer and consumer cooperatives, a push for a federal energy corporation and municipal control of local energy supplies, greater use of public financial institutions and the regulation of investment by private institutions under the powers of their public charters.

Planning themes cropped up repeatedly at the Pittsburgh conference:

•The new coop bank director, Carol Greenwald, argued that limited equity coop housing was virtually the only means remaining for low and moderate income people to own their homes. It provides an opportunity to stop displacement of lower income people while simultaneously creating reinvestment in older urban neighborhoods.

•From a worker's point of view, Don Stillman of the United Auto Workers argued, planning should include a reduced work week, worker voice in corporate decision-making, worker control over new technology, extensive retraining for real jobs for laid-off workers, industry-wide seniority and the right to carry pensions

from job to job ("pension portability"), and community compensation for lost jobs.

•As a bare minimum, Karl Frieden of the National Center for Economic Alternatives suggested, there must be a major public energy corporation in order for the public to have any leverage in planning its energy future.

How can it all be put together—economic planning, anti-corporate politics, a vision of the future that can rally people to programs that, in many ways, they could easily support, even if they now are only on the margins of U.S. politics? Stanley Aronowitz, a professor of politics and long-time union and socialist activist, said that social contract between the majority of white male workers (and their unions) and the corporations had fallen apart after serving handily through several decades of post-war prosperity. But with the Democratic Party "disintegrated," as Max described it, Aronowitz said there was no effective ground for playing pressure politics. The theme was shared by numerous speakers.

Citizen action coalitions, long committed to pressure politics, were now moving toward electoral action, Max noted. And there was considerable agitation from various leaders of the conference to make that organization, perhaps through a sister institution, into something more than a policy think tank and begin giving solid financial and organizing assistance to the progressives it wants to see in office. Manning Marable suggested that the National Black Political Assembly, which he directs, will soon move to form a black Freedom Party. Citizens Party supporters, as well as representatives of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee and the New American Movement, were active in the wings. But there was no clear conviction on how to build that vehicle.

One practical attempt to answer the dilemma that confronted people at the conference came in the form of Jim Hightower, a journalist who ran an effective campaign for the powerful Texas Railroad Commission and narrowly lost with 48 percent of the vote (*In These Times*, May 14). "People are neither right-wing or left-wing," Hightower argued. Some of the most outwardly conservative Texans he approached were "ready for red-hot attacks" on the big energy companies. "We may be dumb, but we know when somebody's got his hands in our pockets," they effectively said.

Hightower can sound as charming, as funny, as convincing, as tough and just as down-home as any conventional Texas politician, but he won support—taking the majority of the white Anglo vote—by taking an unconventionally tough anti-corporate message to the people. "You can't have a mass movement without masses," he said. The conference took the message seriously, learning, for example, the lessons of TV ads from Bill Zimmerman, who produced potent TV spots attacking the recent proposition to eliminate California's rent control laws with Henry Fonda and Ralph Nader urging voters not to let the realtors "destroy the American dream" in their quest to "make more money." The left can be patriotic—honestly—at least as much as the right.

Indeed, the left has a better program for the doldrums of American society than the right in terms of interests of most working people. But it has to fashion the ideology and the machinery to carry it to real victory by winning over the masses of Americans. Despite the right's current crest of victory, there are signs the left can play for keeps, too. After all, the enemies of family, work, neighborhood, peace and freedom are on the right, not the left. ■

(ISSN 0160-5992)

IN THESE TIMES

The Independent Socialist Newspaper

Published 42 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, third week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June, July and August by The Institute for Policy Studies, Inc., 1509 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60622, (312) 489-4444, Cable: THESE TIMES, Chicago, Ill. Institute for Policy Studies National Offices, 1901 Q Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

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Unconventional Republicans

Story by John Judis
Photos by Steve Kagan

DETROIT

THE REPUBLICANS CLAIMED that their July 14-17 convention demonstrated a new unity in party ranks, with Senator Jesse Helms and Senator Jacob Javits, Phyllis Schlafly and Representative Margaret Heckler united behind the Ronald Reagan/George Bush ticket. But the Republican unity was achieved by staging what seemed like two different conventions.

The first convention began on July 7, with the platform hearings, and concluded on July 15, with the adoption of the platform and the triumphant return to the podium of Senator Barry Goldwater. This part of the convention was dominated by what Conservative Caucus chairman Howard Phillips has called the "pro-family, anti-detente, pro-free market new majority." These new and old right Republicans adopted a platform whose stands on abortion, the equal rights amendment, and American nuclear strategy were even more extreme than those advocated by the Reagan camp.

The second convention began Wednesday, July 16, with the backstage negotiations between Reagan and Gerald Ford to gain Ford's assent to the vice-presidency. It went from climax to denouement with Ford's rejection of the Reagan deal and Bush's nomination as vice-president, and it concluded with Ronald Reagan's acceptance speech.

Reagan's choice of Ford and then Bush indicated his capitulation to electoral realism and to the infamous Eastern Establishment, which was finally called upon to put a seal of legitimacy upon the Reagan effort.

Reagan's acceptance speech likewise departed from right-wing as well as traditional Republican orthodoxy. Reagan made a surprising appeal to backers of the Equal Rights Amendment; he omitted any program for American military superiority over the Soviet Union; and in the manner of Jimmy Carter in 1976, he tried to woo working class and minority voters with promises of full employment. He even ended his speech with a quotation from Franklin D. Roosevelt.

To Reagan's right-wing supporters, it was as if their revolution had finally produced not Lenin, but Kerensky, not the Jacobins, but the Girondists. They had seemingly ousted the Eastern elite, resurrected the unity of Church and State, vanquished the defenders of Big Government, and placed American foreign policy firmly on a frontier basis only to have their victory snatched from them not by Jacob Javits, but by Reagan himself.

The conflict in Republican ranks that Reagan's choice of Bush and his campaign strategy will create is fundamentally different from the old Nelson Rockefeller/Barry Goldwater battles. It bears far more resemblance to Jimmy Carter's differences with the current Democratic Party left. Both Reagan and Carter will come out of their conventions having established candidacies separate from any activist base within their parties. Both will be occupying a peculiar never-never-land of post-liberal centrist politics. And whoever is victorious can expect four years of strife, not only from the opposing party, but from within his own.

No more liberals.

Since their emergence in 1896 as a majority party, the Republicans were based in the Northeast and Midwest. With the triumph of the New Deal Democrats, the Republicans remained a predominantly Northern party, divided between a liberal Northeastern wing that espoused the New Deal's internationalism and state

intervention in the economy and a conservative Midwestern wing that was suspicious of American overseas intentions and opposed government intervention in the free market.

The Goldwater revolution of 1964 pitted a new brand of Republicanism, centered in the rapidly growing Sunbelt, and committed rhetorically to free market individualism, social conservatism, and rampant anti-communism, against the Northeastern moderation of Nelson Rockefeller, Hugh Scott, and Clifford Case. The battle at the 1964 convention, which the Goldwaterites won, was over the party's commitment to civil rights and to labor and to the prospect of peace with the Soviet Union.

The 1980 convention was fundamentally different. In its composition and political assumptions, it reflected the triumph of Goldwater Republicanism. There are no more liberal Republicans. The so-called moderates like Bush or Senator Howard Baker have few ties to labor or minorities. While espousing some form of detente, they are certainly not "doves." Probably among existing Republicans, the species that most closely resembles the old liberals is John Anderson's forces, who are economic conservatives, but committed to liberal social values and to a peaceful foreign policy. But Anderson, of course, has left the Republican Party. He was represented in Detroit by a stalwart but ineffec-

tual band of 23 delegates and by the Ripon Society, which was founded in 1962 to rescue the party from Goldwater Republicanism.

The utter destruction of Republican liberalism was typified in the contrast between the Ripon Society's quarters in Detroit and those enjoyed by such right-wing outfits as the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC). While the Ripon Society circulated memos from John Topping Jr.'s room at the Howard Johnson Motor Lodge, NCPAC offered delegates and journalists four days of free drinks and hors d'oeuvres at the Da Vinci Room of the posh Renaissance Center.

Right-wing divisions.

The divisions at the 1980 convention were largely within the right wing. There were at least four different "rights" present in Detroit:

•There is an "old right"—sometimes also called the "respectable right"—that dates from the 1950s. It was largely inspired by William Buckley's *National Review*. Its main organization now is the American Conservative Union, chaired by Representative Robert Baumann, and its chief periodical is the weekly *Human Events*, from which Reagan draws many of his ideas. The old right is largely concerned with economic and foreign policy questions, not with social issues. It resists third party and Democratic appeals in

favor of staunch Republicanism.

•There is the "new right," largely composed of organizations funded by Richard Viguerie. These organizations are much more concerned with social issues, are less committed to the Republican Party than the old right and are more obsessed with the spectre of the Eastern Establishment. Besides NCPAC, the main organizations are Howard Phillips' Conservative Caucus, Paul Weyrich's Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, the Reverend Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority, and Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum. Phillips describes this grouping as the "new majority coalition."

•There is the "pragmatic right" that includes Bush and Baker and many of the corporate Republicans like investment consultant Alan Greenspan, Hewlett Packard board chairman David Packard, and Bechtel chairman George Schultz. Like the old right, they are primarily concerned with "deregulation" and tax breaks for business with an increase in defense expenditure. Unlike the old or new right, they are more aware of the limitations of American power overseas and of the limitations of the private economy at home. They also see the electoral limitations of right-wing Republicanism. And among upper-class Easterners, they tend to be more "liberal" on social issues.

•Finally, there is the group around Representative Jack Kemp, which includes former New Jersey senatorial candidate Jeffrey Bell, economist Arthur Laffer, former *Wall Street Journal* editorial writer Jude Wanniski, and some neo-conservatives like Irving Kristol. The Kemp forces fancy themselves "right-wing populists." They supplement corporate tax breaks with an across-the-board tax cut. They accept the welfare state and argue that Republicans must attract working-class voters. They have no great interest in social issues.

The GOP platform deliberations were dominated by the old right, the new right, and the Kemp forces. Kemp got his tax cut and his program for creating new free-enterprise zones in central cities. Jesse Helms made the Reagan forces accept a goal of American nuclear superiority. (Howard Phillips later defended this plank by saying, "Certainly when the Dallas Cowboys take the field, Tom Landry does not urge them to end up in the fourth quarter with a tie.") And Phyllis Schlafly and the Right-to-Life forces knocked out the ERA and put the GOP on record as favoring a constitutional amendment banning abortions.

The platform naturally alarmed the small band of Anderson Republicans at the convention. "I've been a lifelong Republican," suburban Chicago delegate Jeanne H. Bradner said. "I've lived through 1964. I didn't like it, but I find this much worse. I feel they just don't want the moderates in the party."

But it also alarmed the more pragmatic conservatives who had backed Reagan and Bush in the primaries. The platform convinced them Reagan would have to choose one of the "moderates" as his running mate. "Because of the platform position on ERA and other things, there is going to be a need to reach out a little bit," Mississippi GOP chairman and Reagan delegate Michael Retzer said.

Bush as the enemy.

Because of Reagan's age, Republicans saw his choice of vice-president as defining the Republican succession. The different parts of the right were, however, deeply split on who they wanted.

Much of the old right joined the Kemp forces in promoting Kemp's candidacy. But they had widely differing estimations of the other candidates. The old right was largely reconciled to Bush. In

Continued on page 6.



IN SHORT

Bad-luck Phudnik

Any Yiddish-speaking waiter in a dairy restaurant will tell you that the world is full of *nudniks*, or "pests." But on college campuses across the nation a more refined breed—the *Phudnik*—is constantly causing havoc, or, more frequently, boredom. (A *Phudnik*, of course, is a *nudnik* with a Ph.D.)

A June press release from the University of Chicago's Graduate School of Business provides an excellent glimpse of *Phudnik* logic. The specimen here is a Prof. Abowd:

"John M. Abowd, assistant professor of econometrics and industrial relations, is studying aspects of unemployment; he suggests that the hardship of unemployment is 'bad luck.'... The 'bad luck' may stem from the unanticipated length of a layoff; it may represent going back on the job too soon! It is thus reasonable not to feel too badly about the 'compensated' worker thrown into unemployment."

Anything you say, Doc. As a matter of fact, an increasingly large number of Abowd's fellow *Phudniks* have been sighted on unemployment lines, picking up first-hand data.

"Testing, one, t—"

"People weren't sure what was being simulated and what was actually to be done," said Oran Henderson, director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, as he tried to explain why a recent mock accident held at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant had so many foul-ups.

According to UPI, state officials blamed the drill's failure on "poor communications"—a problem that's been going around the nuclear industry lately (see *In Short*, July 2). The officials said that the flow of crucial information was "a weakness" in Pennsylvania's plans for preparedness during a nuclear accident.

But Henderson insisted that the nature of the exercise, which was mostly on paper, caused part of the confusion: "These are problems we don't have in a real event when people know their responsibilities."

Fangs

When *The New York Times* recently ran a short piece by Richard Haitch about tariffs on tarantulas, it unwittingly began to spin a web of international intrigue. According to Edward Kittredge of the Customs Bureau, tarantulas may be imported duty-free to the U.S., "unless they are Communist tarantulas. Those from the Soviet bloc," he went on, "are subject to a 5 percent tariff."

Puzzled by this discriminatory policy, *In Short* checked with Professor George Uetz of the University of Cincinnati (Biological Sciences). Uetz is an ecologist who works extensively with primitive spiders.

"When I heard this information from behind the Iron Curtain," Uetz said, "it is unlikely that there are any tarantulas in Europe." Then how does he explain the tariff policy? "Someone must be collecting them and shipping them from the Soviet Union."

Part of the confusion may result from worldwide disparity in how tarantulas are named. Throughout the South and Central America, which is where the finest pet tarantulas come from, the nomenclature may focus on the animals' hairy legs or on their parallel fangs, or on their large size (up to eight inches, including the legs). An extreme example of the erratic naming pattern may be found in Argentina, where they call tarantulas "little chickens," according to Vladimir Gertsch in his book *American Spiders*.

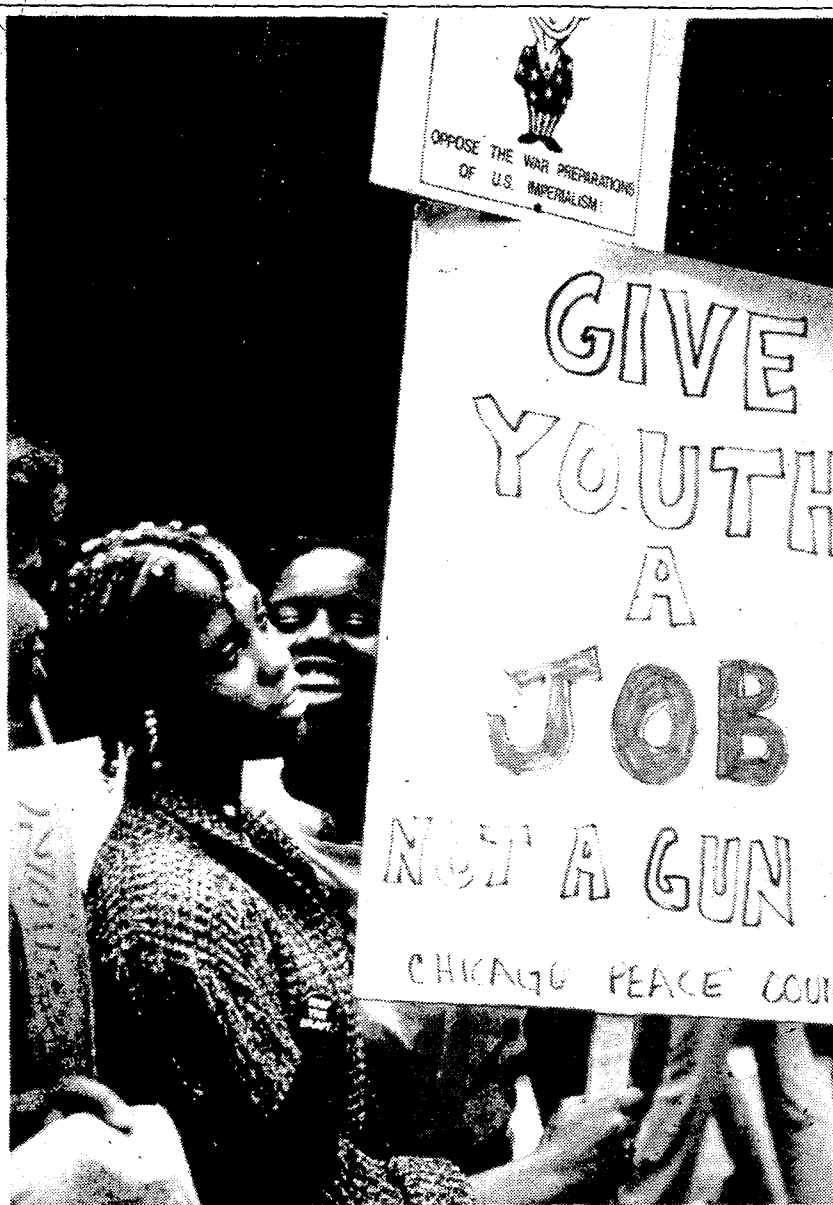
In southern Europe, the big, aggressive wolf spider is often incorrectly referred to as a tarantula—possibly because it belongs to the same sub-order of *mygalomorphae*. According to Uetz, this misconception led to the naming of the rapid, whirling tarantella dance, which originated in Italy, and was meant to shake off the poisonous effects of the wolf spider's venom.

Presuming, then, that the Russians are actually exporting tarantulas—and not wolf spiders, purse-web spiders, trap-door spiders or "little chickens"—where do they get them from?

Asked if the Russians might be swiping them in Afghanistan, Uetz said, "It's possible that there are large spiders over there," although the climate may be a bit too cool for tarantulas.

American officials, perhaps privy to secret information, have singled out "Communist" tarantulas to draw a tariff, but the friendly arachnids are nonetheless being adopted as pets in American homes from coast to coast. No one seems to know where these predatory Reds actually come from, and nobody, including Richard Haitch of *The New York Times*, seems to care.

—Josh Kornbluth



Registration drew pickets to the post office in Chicago.

Non-registrants may face jail term and fine

On July 21, as the Selective Service System kicked off two weeks of draft registration for men born in 1960 and 1961, those considering noncompliance could not be sure whether or not they would be violating the law.

The confusion stemmed mostly from two rapid legal developments over the previous weekend. First, on July 18, a three-judge federal court in Philadelphia ruled that the Military Selective Service Act—which provides for the registration and drafting of men only—is unconstitutional because it violates the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment. Saying that it could not accept the notion that "women can contribute to the military only as volunteers and not as inductees," the court held that the Act "unconstitutionally discriminates between males and females" and ordered a halt to the Carter administration's registration plans.

But the next day the situation was reversed, as Associate Supreme Court Justice William Brennan Jr., acting on an appeal from the Department of Justice, stayed the lower court's injunction. Brennan said that pending the Supreme Court's decision on the case (which could come by Christmas), the government would suffer more if registration were halted than would the four million young men if they had to sign up. The stay allowed registration to begin as scheduled.

So where did that leave the men who refused to register? "If you're not going to register, you're in a calculated-risk situation," advised Jay A. Miller of the Illinois ACLU. "The questions are: (1) will they find you if you don't register? and (2) if they find you, will they prosecute? Also, how many people are they going to prosecute? If you re-

sist openly, your chances of being prosecuted are greater than if you quietly resist and they can't find you or don't notice you."

If you are caught and brought to trial, don't expect the Philadelphia court's ruling to get you off the hook, warned constitutional lawyer Geoffrey Stone of the University of Chicago Law School. "It's important that people understand," he said, "that if they now decline to register, they are technically in violation of the law. It's as if the lower court's ruling that the law is unconstitutional never happened—at least for the time being, until the full Supreme Court gets a chance to decide the case." The maximum penalties for failing to register are a \$10,000 fine and a five-year prison term.

No one is sure whether such indictments—if the Justice Department and Selective Services make good on their word to seek them—would lead to convictions. "I think that someone refusing or failing to register might have a decent defense in front of a jury," said Isabelle Pinsler, who directs the ACLU Women's Rights Project. "It's the obligation of the government to prove all the elements of the crime beyond a reasonable doubt, and they might have some difficulty showing criminal intent, or knowledge."

But Pinsler added, "That is a guess, not a guarantee. Those who say they have a definitive answer, either way, are kidding themselves."

Meanwhile, on the first day of renewed registration, 27 protesters were arrested for blocking the entrances to the central post office in Boston; hundreds demonstrated in downtown Chicago; in Washington, dozens of people blocked doorways to the Selective Service System headquarters building as one

of them read a list of names of Vietnam war dead; and in other places across the country, the revival of the military sign-up met with similar forms of resistance.

—Josh Kornbluth

New Yorkers protest sign-up

NEW YORK—When registration for the draft began last week for the first time since WWII, New Yorkers had a choice of two kinds of protest demonstrations to attend. Many went to both on July 21 and participated in local community protests throughout the two-week registration period.

The Coalition Against Conscription sponsored a picket, draft teach-in and sit-in at the huge general post office in midtown Manhattan. While about 400 marched outside, a group of nearly 200 protesters carried anti-draft literature into the post office and held a teach-in for prospective registrants. About half of them decided not to register. Anyone who wanted to register did so with a police escort. The teach-in turned into a civil disobedience sit-in, which continued until registration ended for the day. No arrests were made, however, because postal officials decided the demonstrators were entitled to express their views. New York media reported that registration throughout the city was low.

On the evening of July 21, the New York Mobilization Against the Draft organized a rally on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, featuring several local liberal politicians and best wishes from presidential candidates Kennedy and Anderson (none from Mr. Reagan, though). The rally was endorsed by various Democratic clubs, peace groups and unions, including District Council 37 AFSME. Although Representative Elizabeth Holtzman, city councilwoman Ruth Messinger and DSOC national chair Michael Harrington addressed the crowd of 5,000, a 19-year-old man created the most dramatic moment of the rally. Representing the coalition against conscription, he was identified not by name (for legal reasons) but by what he was going to do. "I'm not going to register," he told the cheering crowd. "Without knowing who we are they can't draft us, and if they can't draft us, they can't fight a war!"

—Susan Jaffe



Loretta Smith

IN THE NATION

REPUBLICANS

Feminists avoid a direct showdown

By Jo Freeman

DETROIT

FEMINIST PRESENCE AT THE 1980 Republican convention was significantly less than in 1976, even though issues such as the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion were more publicly prominent than ever before. Overwhelmed by conservative Ronald Reagan delegates, the Republican Women's Task Force (RWTF), an affiliate of the National Women's Political Caucus, gamely resisted total annihilation of their issues and their influence with fewer, less organized resources than four years ago.

As in 1976, the RWTF sent a questionnaire to all delegates prior to the convention. According to chair Nancy Thompson, the results were so discouraging the RWTF decided not to publish them. Her cursory review of 400 returned questionnaires showed a four-to-one opposition to the ERA, which has been in every Republican platform since 1940. In contrast, the 1976 survey showed a slight majority for the ERA.

Despite this early indication of defeat, Thompson reported surprise at the 11-to-four loss in GOP platform subcommittee; and liberal Republican delegates John Leopold of Hawaii and Margaret Heckler of Massachusetts made a last-ditch effort to retain support for it in the full platform committee. Heckler urged the committee, which was half-female under the convention rules, not to "make the ERA an election issue." Even so, Leopold's substitute motion was crushed 90-to-nine.

Though the news media focused on the ERA as one of the few controversies at an otherwise placid convention, the RWTF's efforts were hampered by the fact that its ties to the Republican Party were through the declining liberal wing, which had vociferously opposed Reagan in 1976. Therefore, they recruited former GOP co-chair Mary Louise Smith, whose Republican credentials were too solid to be dismissed, as their spokesperson.

Her presence did encourage the antis to moderate their stand. The subcommittee proposal to the platform committee opposed not the ERA, but "federal interference or pressure...against states that have refused to ratify the ERA," while reaffirming "our Party's historic commitment to equal rights and equality for women."

Immediately before the platform committee met, Reagan issues adviser Lorelei Kinder initiated further softening of the language, requesting both pros and antis to accept a sentence acknowledging "the legitimate efforts of those who oppose or support ratification." She knew the ERA did not have enough votes for a floor fight, but didn't want women she thought the RWTF represented to "feel left out." Expressing some concern that liberal Republicans might flock to John Anderson's banner, Kinder wanted the Reagan campaign to manifest an open, conciliatory attitude and maintain party unity.

Mary Louise Smith accepted this olive branch as "an accommodation," while Representative Heckler demanded a personal meeting with Reagan. After this meeting, held Sunday before the convention, Heckler and the RWTF representatives who attended publicly stated that they would support Reagan because they didn't feel his views and the platform were perfectly congruent.

One result of their effort appeared in Reagan's acceptance speech where he

supported furtherance of women's equal participation without proposing specifics.

Clearly outnumbered and outorganized, RWTF felt they had gotten all that was possible this year. But their miniscule numbers and barely visible lobbying effort made such compromises look like a magnanimous gesture by a candidate sensing victory rather than a symbol of women's power.

Nonetheless, Reagan adviser Peter McPherson did not think such efforts were futile. "This whole process of battle and compromising on the ERA is sensitizing the party on women's issues."

Such sensitizing did not take place on abortion. The GOP platform supports the Human Life Amendment, and few voices beyond John Leopold's were raised in protest. As in 1976, the RWTF

chose to concentrate on the ERA because they did not think the two issues should be "confused" and thought they only had the resources for the one. But in 1976 Representative Millicent Fenwick of New Jersey and a few other GOP women quietly lobbied for the elimination of any reference to abortion in the platform. They failed, but they did achieve a floor discussion.

This year, Fenwick was not present. Except for a Ripon Society press release, not a single button or any other sign of pro-choice sentiment appeared at the GOP convention. Yet not all delegates were anti-abortion.

According to Marlene Elwell, chair of the Pro-Life Impact Committee, a delegate survey disclosed only 60 percent in support of a Human Life Amendment. She estimated that the lobbying of her 100-person group, formed solely for the convention, increased that support by 20 percent. This success was reflected in the platform committee vote on Leopold's amendment to the subcommittee's report for a neutral recognition of the right to differ on the issue of abortion. His motion was defeated 75-to-18.

Would a pro-choice presence have made any difference? According to Lorelei Kinder, the Reagan campaign was prepared to listen to anyone. "If they had been lobbying [on abortion], the platform committee had many people who would have liked softer language. But we were never approached on abortion." ■
Jo Freeman is the author of The Politics of Women's Liberation.



Steve Kagan



Reagan seeks to win black support

By Manning Marable

THE BIGGEST SURPRISE OF THE Republican Party Convention was its heavy emphasis on black interests. Indeed, Ronald Reagan seemed to go out of his way to appease his party's fragile foothold in the black middle class.

Across the board, there are fresh signs that the Grand Old Party is attempting to refurbish its approach toward blacks. Symbolically, this began early last year when the Reverend Jesse Jackson was invited to speak before the Republican National Committee. A black consultant firm from Columbus, Ga., was hired to give white Republican candidates "pointers" on methods of communication with grassroots black constituents.

The GOP convention continued the trend. The Reverend Jerry Moore, a black minister from the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., gave the invocation at the initial session. The Convention's secretary and caller of roles was a black state senator from Maryland, Dr. Aris T. Allen. In a television interview, Allen rejected the charge that he was a "token." "I've paid my dues to the Republican Party," he explained. He admitted that many black

people "feel that they aren't really welcome to run for office" under the Republican banner. But Allen insisted that under Reagan's leadership things would change. "I went to [Reagan's] record as governor of California," he declared. "More blacks were hired under Reagan than in any previous administration. More minorities were hired than by any governor in the United States."

Conveniently, Allen ignored the fact that during Reagan's tenure as governor (1967-75) virtually all states were forced to recruit and hire blacks, Hispanics and women in record numbers; that Reagan appointed almost no progressive black leaders to positions of influence; that the conditions for California blacks in terms of jobs, welfare benefits, etc., improved only in spite of Reagan. Indeed, more blacks were also hired by Alabama Governor George Wallace than in any previous administration.

In reality, current GOP leadership and intellectuals are still recruited from the country clubs and executive suites across America. The median family income for Republican delegates was \$47,000 per year. Only 56 blacks were counted among the 1,994 delegates to the convention.

In a hasty but conciliatory maneuver, Reagan met with black Republican leader Jim Cummings and other members of

the National Black Republican Council. Black delegates threatened to cause unrest unless NAACP executive director Benjamin Hooks was permitted to address the convention. It was a marriage of convenience: Hooks attempted to reacquire legitimacy as the nation's black spokesman by grandstanding before a national audience, and Reagan hoped to buy black votes this November.

The facade of GOP change took place in the city of Detroit, an urban disaster area administered by Jimmy Carter's favorite black mayor, Coleman Young, who also made his presence felt at the convention. The choice of Detroit was bitterly ironic. Detroit has 230,000 people on Aid for Dependent Children; its automobile factories are shutting down; its official rate of unemployment (at 18 percent and climbing) is twice the national average. Yet in Detroit, the symbol of the excesses of unchecked big business, leaders of the Republican Party, black and white, chose to sing their high hosannas to the sacred cows of private enterprise, state's rights, anti-communism and laissez-faire economics.

In short, the politics of Ronald Reagan specifically and that of the Republican Party in general represent symbols without substance for the Black Movement. One cannot help but agree with *New York Times* columnist James Reston that "the delegates, with their serious intentions and their silly hats...don't have the vaguest idea where Reagan is going or who's going with him." Sadly, this sorry observation is also true for Benjamin Hooks and for the black leaders in the Republican Party. ■

Manning Marable is a leader of the National Black Political Assembly.



Steve Kagan

Delegates satirize themselves

By John Judis

DETROIT

The delegates to the 1980 Republican convention exemplified the shift of Republican strength from the Northeast to the South and West and the transformation of Republican orthodoxy from a mix of liberalism, progressivism and

Taftian conservatism to a blend of the new and old right.

Southern Republican delegates had little in common with the old Republican Party of the South, which contained most of the enfranchised blacks, or with the Progressive Republicanism of the West, which produced Hiram Johnson and Earl Warren. The new "Sunbelt" Republicans (who extend upward through

Alaska) are upper-middle-class WASPs whose incomes often derive from the region's new growth industries. Befitting entrepreneurs in highly competitive non-union industries, they are virulently anti-union and anti-government regulation of business. "I'd like Ronald Reagan to get rid of the Energy Department, the Education Department, the minimum wage, reduce our taxes, and increase the

military budget to help us with the threat we face from Russia right now," Baton Rouge, La., delegate Michael G. Chittom explained.

The new delegates combine an intense fear of communism (which, reminiscent of the McCarthy era, they lump with government regulation) and a passionate belief in the virtues of the middle-class Protestant family, which stems both from their own individual success and from the specter of secularism, divorce, homosexuality, and abortion.

These traits were typified to the point of parody in the Alaska delegation, which was taken over prior to the convention by the Moral Majority, a group founded in 1979 by the Reverend Jerry Falwell, a Lynchburg, Va., television evangelist. It tries to recruit normally apolitical born-again Christians to New Right politics through such issues as school prayer, abortion and homosexuality.

Moral Majority followers in Alaska had replaced expected delegation head Senator Ted Stevens with one of their own, Marilyn Gay, the chair of the state Reagan campaign. In an interview with *In These Times*, Gay explained that she and her fellow delegates "were just concerned Christians. I've been in politics 18 years, and I've been going to Anchorage Baptist Church. Now we just combine the two."

Gay explained their "pro-family" stance in terms of religion. "Our nation was founded one nation under God," she said, "and God's plan was for a man and his wife."

Gay's main interest, however, was in stopping a "communist takeover" of the U.S. "The first step in communists taking over is getting the government to control everything," she said. "If we let everything be controlled by Washington, then all they have to do is take over that one city."

Gay suspected that "there must be communists in Washington right now. It's possible they are Americans. When the communists take over, it's always been the people right there." ■

Reagan

Continued from page 3.

June, *Human Events*, which supported Kemp, had even allowed former Bush aide David Keene to argue at length for the choice of Bush.

But the Kemp forces feared Bush more than any other possibility. They argued that Reagan's main concern in the fall should not be winning over Republican moderates, but working-class Democrats in the Northeast. "I fail to see how Bush has more appeal to blue-collar workers than Jack Kemp does," Jude Wanniski said.

The Kemp forces feared that Bush, who once described the Kemp approach as "voodoo economics," would freeze them out of the Reagan campaign and of a future Reagan administration. "We're a movement of ideas," Wanniski explained. "We need access to people who can implement those ideas. If George Bush is the vice president, do you think we're going to see Reagan's speeches for comment? Do you think we'll get to review the TV spots? No, we'll get shut out. If Bush is the vice-president of a Reagan administration, it will be an entirely different cabinet. Bush is the enemy."

The new right forces largely backed Jesse Helms rather than Kemp. They argued that Reagan would do best by backing someone with the same philosophy as his own. "There is a conservative tide in this country," NCPAC's John Dolan explained. "The issues are on our side."

Dolan, Phillips, and Schlafly warned that if Bush or Baker were the nominees, there would be tremendous defections in right-wing ranks. "George Bush would be very hurtful to the ticket," Schlafly said. "There would be a great deal of people who would not vote."

But they were not concerned with Bush or Baker's economics—most of the New Right is more committed to spending cuts than tax cuts—but with their support of ERA and closeness to the Eastern Estab-

lishment brand of pragmatic Republicanism. With Bush, his membership in the Trilateral Commission became a lightning rod for "New Right" misgivings.

In choosing a vice president, Reagan made one important concession to his various right-wing supporters: he threw out Baker, who might have helped Reagan to split the South as well as to allay his media critics. But with Baker out, Reagan approached the vice-presidential choice with little respect for the ideological predilections of the New Right or the Kemp forces.

His choices of Ford and Bush were, above all, dictated by electoral imperatives. Reagan's pollster Richard Wirthlin discovered that of all the vice-presidential candidates, only Ford would positively help the ticket. Of the remaining choices, Bush had the least "unfavorables."

Reagan's choice was also dictated by his desire to make peace with the coterie of investment bankers, corporate heads, and Washington policy experts upon whom he would have to rely in order to govern. ("Ronald Reagan joins the establishment," *In These Times*, July 2.) These pragmatic Republicans favored Ford, Baker and Bush, whose cautious views of Kemp-Roth and detente were close to their own.

Reagan's willingness to negotiate away significant presidential prerogatives in trying to get Ford on the ticket indicates the decisive influence that the pollsters and the Eastern Establishment had over him during the convention.

His nomination of Bush sets up a bitter battle for the Republican succession between a future Reagan administration and the New Right. "If and when Ronald Reagan starts doing liberal things, and I think he will," NCPAC's John Dolan said, "conservatives will say, 'You're wrong, and we're not going to go along with this.' I have a prediction that within a year of the Reagan presidency, you'll see that type of confrontation."

It also sets up a bitter battle for the Republican succession between Bush and Kemp. The shape of this battle will depend, however, on whether Kemp chooses to emphasize the "right wing" or the "populist" side of his views.

Reagan's acceptance speech was also a departure, but it reflected somewhat different priorities from his choice of Bush as nominee. Reagan's references to equal rights for women and the omission of any call for a massive arms buildup were, of course, concessions to the party's pragmatic wing. But his espousal of full employment through tax cuts, along with the preservation of the welfare state, reflected the Kemp forces' campaign strategy.

The corporate Republicans like Alan Greenspan and Charles Walker favor some tax cuts, but they fear that the full Kemp-Roth program, which promises increased revenue as well, would be inflationary. To encourage economic growth, they prefer tax credits on corporate investment. But in pursuit of working-class votes in the North, Reagan took the path laid out by Kemp and Wanniski.

Reagan did bow toward the corporate Republicans' fears by saying he would only put the second and third years of Kemp-Roth into effect "within the context of economic conditions and appropriate budget priorities." But this qualification, like Carter's 1976 qualifications of his support for the Humphrey-Haw-

kins Full Employment bill, are likely to be lost on the average voter, who will heed Reagan's promise "to put America back to work."

In taking this path, Reagan risks creating false expectations among the electorate. In Great Britain, for instance, where Reagan's heroine Margaret Thatcher has attempted a tax cut/deregulation strategy for growth, unemployment is now at a post-war high of 6.1 percent and inflation is at 22 percent. Reagan's policies would probably have similar effects in the U.S. To the extent that Reagan can convince Northern workers that his regressive tax cuts are really in their interest, he will be fuelling their subsequent disillusionment and laying the groundwork for a left-wing "full employment" revolt against his policies.

Reagan's campaign strategy is therefore fraught with peril. It can potentially alienate the Sunbelt upper-middle-class right wing while failing over the long run to secure him a stable base among American workers. In this respect, Reagan does find himself in a similar position to Carter in 1976 and again in 1980, searching for electoral majorities among the ruins of past coalitions. ■

Vice-presidential candidate George Bush.



Steve Kagan

ENERGY

Can alcohol pose an alternative to liquid fossil fuels?

With congressional approval in June of a synthetic fuels program initially providing at least \$20 billion in government loan and price guarantees, the United States took a big and controversial step toward obtaining liquid fuels—primarily for running cars and trucks—from sources other than petroleum.

The Carter administration has also given a small nod toward ethanol—ethyl alcohol—production, but official assessments from the Office of Technology Assessment, the Department of Energy's Alcohol Fuels Review and its Energy Research Advisory Board as well as a private study by Worldwatch Institute have been pessimistic about alcohol from biomass—plants, grains, wastes and other biological stocks. Those studies conclude that biomass could yield only two to 12 billion gallons of alcohol a year or less than 10 percent of current gasoline demand and that to do so would produce a costly fuel and seriously threaten world food production.

Biologist Barry Commoner, one of the leading advocates of alcohol fuel production and now Citizens Party presidential candidate, testified before Senator George McGovern's subcommittee on alcohol fuels earlier this summer, that those analyses were grossly misleading. Commoner argued that nearly half the present gasoline consumption could be replaced with ethanol without reducing food or feed production, without serious soil loss, without increased use of fertilizers and pesticides, with substantial net energy gain and at a competitive price that will most likely decline while syn-

Official studies are pessimistic about its viability, but critics question their claims and their motives.

thetic fuels from nonrenewable sources like coal go up. Using new technologies that will make woody materials into a sugar base that can then be fermented, Commoner estimates that the liquid fuel production from biomass would triple.

The key to Commoner's analysis is a radical revision of American agriculture—conversion to different crops (greatly increasing sugar beet production, for example), exploitation of the residue as a nutritious livestock feed, reliance on moderate-scale alcohol plants located on farms and in rural areas, and employment of organic agricultural practices that minimizes soil loss and energy demands.

Critics of the conversion of coal, tar sands, oil shale and other petroleum substitutes into liquid fuel have stressed the program's high and unpredictable costs, its environmental and health problems, and its continued concentration of control of energy resources in the hands of a few large corporations. Commoner, for example, attacked the influence of Mobil Oil—through two of its consultants who served on the seven-member Energy Research Advisory Board—in scuttling alcohol fuels. Mobil not only has extensive coal holdings and growing investments in synthetic fuel plants but also holds a crucial patent for one of the two means for

making methanol from coal usable as an auto fuel.

But there are also serious questions raised about alcohol production from environmentalists, agricultural specialists and energy analysts who are not as tainted as Mobil's consultants. Rich Carlson, a research associate of Commoner at the Center for the Biology of Natural Systems, outlines the case for alcohol fuel production. Charles Washburn, a professor of mechanical engineering at California State University at Sacramento, associated with the Land Institute in Salina, Kan., offers a critique of alcohol from agricultural production.

Yes, but with different crops

By Rich Carlson

THE "CRASH" ALCOHOL PRODUCTION programs announced earlier this year by the Carter administration was largely symbolic. It simply repeated incentives already in existence or pending in Congress. Also, the wide discrepancy between the administration's optimistic alcohol production target—2 billion gallons of production capacity per year by the mid-1980s, compared to the present 80 million gallons capacity—and the lack of significant new measures to insure such speedy production is reminiscent of Carter's 1979 goal of obtaining 20 percent of our energy from solar sources by 2000 but only funding solar programs to achieve half that level. To undertake such a program, however, it is necessary to address some controversial issues regarding substantial future commitment to ethyl alcohol produced from agricultural crops.

Is more energy required to grow a crop and to ferment it into alcohol than is supplied by the gasoline energy it replaces, as some critics maintain? This seemingly straightforward question is quite complex. Different types of energy that enter into the process have different values to society. (No one questions that electricity is worth producing even though three British thermal units (BTUs) of fossil fuel are required for one Btu of electricity.) Energy requirements for farming differ among regions, and some new distillation plants use far less energy than older ones. The byproduct of alcohol fermentation can be used as feed: how much energy value is it given? Also, petroleum refinery energy can be saved by making lower octane gasoline that is blended with alcohol to boost the octane rating. Recent studies show that there is a clear energy gain if no high-grade fuel, such as oil or gas, is used to run the distillery. Future improvements in alcohol plant design combined with energy-conserving crop cultivation can further increase this net energy gain.

Some gasohol opponents claim that converting grain into alcohol will reduce the available supply of food for foreign export to hungry nations and for domestic consumption, mainly meat from animals deprived of feed grains. But fermentation of grain into alcohol only eliminates the starch, leaving all the original protein and vitamins, the main nutritional need in the world. The loss of carbohydrates could, nevertheless, reduce the food supply unless there is a

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No, it would cost too much

By Charles Washburn

AFTER PRESIDENT CARTER decided to curtail grain exports to Russia, he promised to soften the blow to America's farmers by purchasing the grain and converting it to alcohol for blending with gasoline to produce "gasohol." Carter tried to demonstrate that even a Georgian could show plenty of Yankee ingenuity: a blow to

Russia could also be a blow to OPEC. Gasohol promises something for nearly everybody. The farmers get new markets for their "surplus" production capability. The city slickers get assured fuel supplies for their gas guzzlers. Detroit can hope that a national gasohol program will reduce car buyers' "fuel anxieties" and slow government fuel economy regulations. The grain processors, alcohol producers and petroleum companies get a new product complete with large subsidies.

Anything this good must have less to it than meets the eye. For example, if this year's world wheat, rice, corn and sugar crops could be converted to alcohol with no deduction for the energy required for farming and alcohol produc-

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In These Times

"As a mossback conservative, I particularly appreciate getting a non-sectarian left view of well-sought and well-reported news."

Stewart Brand
Editor of Co-Evolution Quarterly



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HEALTH & SAFETY



An OSHA industrial hygienist interviewing a worker wearing an air-sampling device.

The '70 OSHA Act offers little safety

By John T. O'Connor

WITHOUT VIGILANT ENFORCEMENT by workers on the job, the federal occupational safety and health standards first established in 1970 would be meaningless. There certainly are not now and probably never could be enough inspectors to guarantee employer compliance with the law. Congress, responding to union arguments, specifically gave workers the right to act on their own behalf to call job hazards to the attention of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

But workers are finding it increasingly tough to use even the limited rights guaranteed them under the act. Many companies now fire or otherwise discriminate against workers who invoke their rights, appeal and block OSHA inspections and investigatory procedures and win more "employer rights" before the courts and OSHA's own employer-biased review commission.

The Supreme Court's 1978 Barlow decision outlawed warrantless inspections of workplaces. But the court added that OSHA could get an *ex parte* warrant. That is, the agency could obtain a warrant from a federal judge without tipping off the boss or showing probable cause.

The Barlow decision further bogged OSHA down in red tape and litigation—the kind that business executives otherwise bitterly complain about but applaud when it comes to obstructing the enforcement of protective legislation. Since that ruling things have gotten worse.

•Shortly after a worker was killed at a Bellefonte, Pa., firm, Cerro Metals, Inc., workers (through their United Auto Workers representative) requested an OSHA inspection. The employer, upon arrival of a warranted inspector, refused entry and then successfully secured a preliminary injunction to prevent the inspectors for the Third Circuit ruled in favor of the employer. The court decided that OSHA has no power to seek *ex parte* warrants and that preventing the inspection "was necessary to protect employers from imminent and irreparable harm...."

•After five deaths in a nine-month period at Pool Offshore Co., OSHA applied for a warrant to inspect work areas. The employer denied the inspector ac-

cess and contested the inspection warrant in the U.S. District Court for the West District of Louisiana. Again the court upheld the employer's position. The issuance of an inspection warrant was improper "because OSHA failed to show reasonable legislative or administrative goals."

•Last year a worker complained to OSHA that he and fellow workers had become ill from the daily fumigating operations at Cargill, Inc., the giant grain corporation. Even though OSHA verified that the employer used a fumigation process, the court said that the agency had "failed to make a reasonable showing upon which a finding of probable cause could be based for issuance of an inspection warrant."

•Worker aid in enforcement requires protection of the right under the OSHA Act to inform inspectors about where the hazards are to be found. Last November, a Massachusetts federal district court ruled in favor of Wallaston Alloys Inc., claiming that a warrant obtained by an OSHA inspector was not specific enough to justify interviews with employees, even though such interviews were necessary in order for the inspector to find the most hazardous areas of the plant.

Fighting is cheaper.

Even when inspections are made and citations issued, the legal battles continue. "Between 1973 and 1979 contested enforcement cases increased 400 percent," Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall reported to the Senate in March 1980. The secretary also reported that the contest rate for serious health violations was up to 47.8 percent, or 5,681 out of 11,884 serious violations cited in 1979.

Contesting is a cheaper way to deal with the problem of a health and safety correction order because litigation costs are tax deductible, and, more importantly, once a citation is contested, the abatement of the hazard is delayed until the case is settled. An average appeal takes three years. If it goes to the Supreme Court it could take five or more years before the issues are settled.

Joining these contests are large industry associations like the American Petroleum Institute, the Society of the Plastics Industry, the American Industrial Health Council, the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. Retaining OSHA-fight-

ing lawyers, scientific experts, economists and public relations firms that tell us "Life itself would be impossible without chemicals," they are pooling millions of dollars for efforts that delay or stop improvements in worker health and safety programs.

"This is only the beginning," exclaims Gary Jarmin, director of the "Stop OSHA" project of the American Conservative Union. By the time we are through, we'll have the teeth out of OSHA." (The "Stop OSHA" project, formerly chaired by Representative George Hansen (R-Id.) and conservative syndicated columnist M. Stanton Evans, has changed its name to the Labor Task Force, now chaired by Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah.)

Let's say workers are successful in getting an OSHA inspector in the door. Then what?

Section 11(c) of the OSHA Act prohibits employers from firing or discriminating against workers who exercise their rights under the Act, such as filing complaints on hazardous working conditions or telling the inspector where to look for the problems. However, "the easiest way to cripple the effectiveness of an OSHA inspection is to retaliate quickly against an employee who cooperates with an inspector," says Steve Wodka of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW). "When it becomes apparent that the process to get that person's job back will take years, the chilling effect on that group of workers becomes a deep freeze. Even though the Act prohibits such conduct by employers, it is unenforceable."

The facts support this claim. The Department of Labor reports that in 1979 OSHA received 2,953 discrimination complaints to be handled by 52 investigators. Going into 1980, 1,400 of these are backlogged from 1979. Additionally, 3,300 to 4,000 new cases are expected in 1980, to be handled by the same 52 inspectors.

More shocking are the 429 cases that investigators have found to have merit for prosecution against employers. Presently the cases are languishing in the Labor Department's Solicitor's Office, the lawsuits unfiled because of lack of resources.

The weakest link in the OSHA legal system is the Occupational Safety and

Unfriendly courts; not enough funds and lack of government support plague OSHA.

Health Review Commission (OSHRC), an agency set up to give business its "day in court." OSHRC is separate from the Department of Labor. It was established by the original OSHA Act as a concession to Republican senators and business interests.

The Review Commission's general counsel, Robert Gombor, former Jones and Laughlin Steel Corp. attorney, boasts that "OSHRC is no rubber stamp for OSHA."

Once an inspection is made the employer can immediately appeal to the OSHRC to contest any violations. The employer can petition for a variance of standards, ask for full or partial relief from compliance orders, or ask to have fines reduced or vacated. If there is no success at that level, the employer can then appeal to the circuit court of appeals and then to the Supreme Court. (Workers can contest only the time that OSHA gives the company to correct hazards—and chairman Cleary reports that workers use the commission process in less than 1 percent of the cases.)

The major problem with the process is that the law allows the correction of serious hazards to be stayed during the duration of the contest—on average three

years, five or more if the case reaches the Supreme Court. In other words, "a condition that has killed or seriously injured a worker can legally remain unabated while the review process unfolds," Wodka explains.

OSHRC statistics show that the review process favors the employer. Last year, in 68 percent of all cases the OSHRC gave employers either full relief, partial relief, reduced penalties or eliminated fines altogether. In 25 percent of the cases, OSHRC ruled in favor of OSHA charges. In 6 percent of the cases no penalties were assessed, and 1 percent of the time companies were given higher fines.

Those numbers refer to the 11 percent of the cases that make it to a review hearing. In 89 percent of the cases there is a settlement between the employer and the Review Commission or an administrative law judge.

Lane Kirkland, AFL-CIO president, charges that "because of the heavy case load of contested citations, Department of Labor Solicitors [who each handle close to 100 cases at a time] are under great pressure to settle contested cases.... The settlements often do not guarantee the protection of workers and wipe out the possibility of precedent-setting decisions for future enforcement proceedings."

Union defenses.

Weak laws, court decisions favoring employers, an OSHA hampered by a virtual budgetary freeze, and lack of support in Congress and the highest levels of the Carter administration, leave worker health and safety unprotected. Workers are finding no other alternative but to turn to unions and the collective bargaining process to guarantee better working conditions.

For example, the Steelworkers' recent settlement with the major steel companies goes further than OSHA to protect worker health and safety. Existing federal regulations merely require steel companies to keep levels of the poisonous carbon monoxide gas at levels below 50 parts per million but set no provisions for doing so. The new pact makes the companies conduct "comprehensive surveys" at each plant to identify carbon monoxide areas. Then companies must install sensing devices equipped with alarms that must be constantly checked to insure reliability.

The settlement also makes the company pay for extensive health and safety training of workers so that they can make inroads toward controlling their own health and safety programs.

At the Kawecki-Beryllco Industries, a Department of Defense contractor manufacturing pure beryllium metal, beryllium dust levels exceeded the federal limit by 1000 times in 1971, and the union—OCAW—found 10 percent of the workers had a debilitating lung disease caused by beryllium. From 1971 to 1973 union experts educated rank and file about the hazards of the beryllium dust.

In 1973 a three-part health and safety program was negotiated into the union's contract. The company agreed to allow the union's industrial hygienist access to the plant to measure dust levels and to make engineering and work practice recommendations. Union-designated doctors did medical surveillance of workers. Finally, two local union members were trained in dust sampling and given their own sampling equipment and the right to leave work to sample during dusty conditions. The company bore all the costs of the program.

By 1979, the workers had pressured the employer below the OSHA beryllium exposure limit at a level that was close to meeting OSHA's new proposed limit. Workers never once called OSHA.

"The power to require safe and healthy working conditions can come only through the self-education and organization of workers under the leadership of their union," says OCAW's Tony Mazzocchi.

With little under 20 percent of the workplace organized, more unions are clearly needed to establish shop floor organizations that can day in and day out deal with a changing and hazardous technology that has yearly led to the early deaths of thousands of Americans. ■

IN THE WORLD



South Korean police arresting members of the New Democratic Party after a raid on their headquarters, Aug. 12.

ASIA

U.S. backs a new oppressive regime in South Korea

By David Fleishman

TOKYO

SOUTH KOREA'S NEW RULER, Chun-Du-hwan, has clamped down on popular opposition even more fiercely than his predecessor Park-Chung-ee, whose 20-year rule was ended by an assassin's bullet last October. Brutal enforcement of martial law began before the May uprising in Kwangju and has not let up since that outbreak was put down by government troops in a vicious action that left some 600 dead.

Chun has outlawed all political activity, closed the National Assembly, and jailed nearly all of South Korea's prominent politicians as well as students, writers, religious and labor leaders. A Peace Corps worker in Kwangju told *In These Times* that arrests and beatings of young people continued for weeks after the rebellion ended. Christian sources in Seoul report that as many as 10,000 activists there have gone into hiding to avoid the fate of their comrades.

And while Chun's main source of support, the U.S. government, has several times expressed official concern, Washington goes right on backing the regime. Two days after Chun's May 17 expansion of martial law, the U.S. State Department stated that it had "made clear the seriousness of our concern to Korean

leaders" and called for a prompt resumption of progress toward constitutional reform and civilian government. But the next day the Export-Import Bank—the American agency that finances foreign sales of U.S.-based corporations with taxpayers' money—announced a \$170 million loan to South Korea for the purchase of telecommunications equipment from Western Electric.

Over the years the Seoul government has been the Ex-Im's biggest customer. Right now the bank has over \$3.3 billion in outstanding commitments in South Korea, including loans for six of the country's seven nuclear reactors.

Business as usual.

Besides offering its own billions in loans, the Ex-Im Bank serves as a bellweather for commercial banks concerned about the security of investment in a given country. Ex-Im's confidence in Chun during the Kwangju rebellion, in effect, signalled private lenders to remain in Korea.

A few days after the State Department declaration, Ex-Im head John Moore flew to Seoul, leading a special 18-member trade mission from New Orleans. He assured the military clique that despite Secretary of State Muskie's discomfort with killing in the streets, Ex-Im would grant all of South Korea's current loan requests, totaling \$631 million. Included are \$32 million for nuclear fuel fabrica-

tion, \$42 million for the Korea Oil Company (half owned by Gulf Oil), \$60 million for Honan Petro Chemical (half owned by CalTex), and 11 other "development" projects.

"Any idea that the U.S. will try to threaten Korea, if indeed it should be unhappy with what's going on here, is rather remote," Moore told the *Asian Wall Street Journal*. "The U.S. hopes the military will back the good economic planning here. Better administration may result if the military supports the economic ministers."

Following Moore's pledge of support, the U.S.-Korea Economic Council, made up of the major American corporations doing business in Korea, held its biggest meeting ever. A 67-man delegation was led to Seoul on June 9 by James Voss, chair of CalTex Oil, one of the handful of American oil companies that control South Korea's petroleum production.

The meeting was used by Chun to demonstrate foreign confidence in his shaky regime. The government-controlled *Korea Times* commented on the significance of "the fact that the annual meeting was held as scheduled, despite the recent social and political turmoil here."

Besides direct American loans, multilateral lending institutions have also backed up Seoul's new rulers. The World Bank-sponsored International Economic Consultative Organization for Korea, a collection of South Korea's ten biggest creditor nations led by the U.S., met in Paris in late June. The U.S. agreed, along with nine other bigtime bankrollers, to lend Korea \$7 to \$8 billion a year for the next six years. The 1980 grant includes \$3.2 billion for two 900-megawatt nuclear power plants, to be built by France's Creusot-Loire.

Washington's only concrete reaction on the economic front has been to abstain on two multilateral loan votes, one in the Asian Development Bank and one in the International Monetary Fund. Absenteeism by the U.S. was nothing more than a symbolic gesture that allowed the loans to pass, as planned. In addition, a visit to Seoul by the head of the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation was postponed.

In the military sphere, solid American support has never wavered. When General Chun needed 17,000 troops to reassert his control over Kwangju, he had to ask U.S. commanding general John Wickham to release them from his command. Wickham gave the nod, and in addition freed up 40,000 troops to patrol the streets of Seoul.

The Red herring.

All the while, President Carter issued stern warnings to North Korea, despite Defense Department analysts' reports that there were no unusual troop movements north of the border. Carter's warnings to the north were played up heavily in the South Korean press, to add credibility to Chun's claims that his extreme measures were needed for national security.

U.S. military aid to South Korea last year exceeded the previous five years put together. In the first half of the year alone, military sales to South Korea included an \$85,173 interrogator set, \$235,000 worth of riot control chemicals, and \$27 million worth of helicopters. (Gunfire from helicopters sparked the fighting in Kwangju.)

On June 5, just after the Kwangju rebellion was crushed, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a \$251 million military aid package for Seoul, including \$85 million for "emergency ammunition stockpiling."

Impotent giant.

American public policy was stated succinctly by one State Department official. While deeply disturbed, "moral suasion is the only means by which the U.S. can influence Korea." He explained to reporters, "We haven't much useable leverage otherwise."

This view is nonsense, according to the Quaker International Affairs Program staff in Tokyo. Freezing Chun's lifeline of military sales and U.S. loans and grants is one immediate option. Curbing grain shipments is another. Diplomatic pressure would quickly get results. Withdrawal of any of the 40,000 GI's in Kor-

ea would certainly put the military dictators on notice.

Looking to the future, Bruce Cummings, a specialist on Korea at the University of Washington's School of International Studies, notes disturbing parallels to Iran. "American policy makers have sought to secure stability amidst vast social and economic changes by encouraging an accumulation of power in the hands of tough dictators like the Shah and President Park," according to Cummings.

"Will the administration stand by Chun until South Korea is another Iran? The U.S. has extraordinary leverage to convince Chun that the American commitment is not interminable and irrevocable. But it remains to be seen what the American commitment really is," Cummings observes.

The spring's momentum toward democracy in South Korea has been broken. Experienced activists are in jail or in hiding. Short term prospects are bleak.

On the other hand, the worsening economy, a negative growth rate for the first quarter of this year, makes it impossible for the regime to calm workers with a promise of another "economic miracle." In addition, the Korean people's near universal loss of faith in the government and in working for change through the existing system guarantees that the push for democracy will continue. Recognition of the need for change is more widespread than ever.

Chun and his supporters abroad have a chance to change now. Otherwise they will just be marking time until the next explosion.

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President J.R. Jayawardene is turning Sri Lanka over to the multinational corporations, and, in the process, living conditions are going down the tube.



SRI-LANKA

By Susan George

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

IN THE FIFTH CENTURY A.D., KING Kassapa of Ceylon built a vast castle-fortress covering three acres on the flat top of the 600-foot Sigiriya rock. Today's climber spends nearly an hour scaling the sheer walls on a dizzying series of staircases, catwalks and hollowed-out footholds. Many of Kassapa's subjects, unprotected by iron railings, must have lost their lives carrying the hundreds of tons of bricks and other supplies up the cliff to build the fortress—and the peasants of the surrounding plains must have worked overtime to provide the surplus to pay for it. Opinion remains divided as to whether Kassapa was a brilliant Oriental strategist, or just slightly mad.

In the twentieth century, President J.R. Jayawardene of Sri Lanka is investing two billion rupees (\$135 million), almost sure to be exceeded, in a huge lotus-shaped parliamentary complex to be built in the marshy Kotte area on the outskirts of Colombo. Although ancient texts cautioned the Kings against building here, the president may have selected

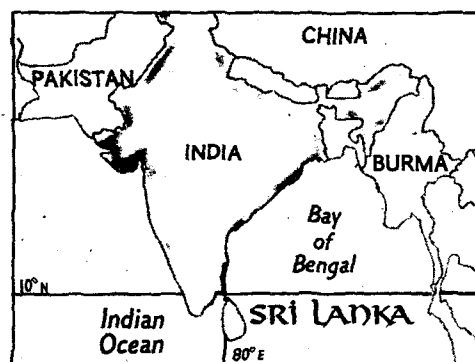
the site because it bore the traditional name of Jayawardene Pura—Jayawardene City. Hundreds of tractors and earth-moving machines have been mobilized and a procession of trucks bearing land-fill have created a permanent cloud of dust around the area. So far, the marsh has resisted all efforts to turn it into a constructible site: at least King Kassapa was building on solid rock. One Sri Lankan observer remarks wryly, "This will be known as the government that moved earth from one place to another."

It may also be known as the government that turned a "showcase," relatively self-reliant, democratic Third World country into a third-rate market economy, relying on transnational corporations for employment, on the World Bank and the IMF for bail-out funds and on oppression for quelling popular protest.

When Ceylon obtained independence and dominion status from Britain in 1948 (it became the sovereign Republic of Sri Lanka in 1972), it was, after Japan, probably the most developed country in Asia. Among the 37 nations the World Bank classes as "low-income countries," it has the lowest infant mortality rate,

the highest life expectancy and the highest rate of per capita food production. Not only is its standard of living exceptional for the area, but it also boasts a literacy rate of more than 80 percent and an unusually well organized working class and trade union movement. Although the 1971 insurrection was brutally put down by Mrs. Bandaranaike's government, it did give rise to some partial reforms like the Land Reform Act of 1972. There is general agreement that the bases for the present monetarist, free market policies were laid by Mrs. B., but the July 1977 elections that brought the United National Party (UNP) to power gave Jayawardene a mandate to pursue them that he lost no time in using.

This lush island—a paradise for the casual tourist—has now abandoned subsidies that ensured basic food consumption for the entire population and dropped measures that protected local industry and encouraged self-reliance. They have been replaced by policies Milton Friedman would surely applaud. But he would not be joined by the majority of Sri Lankans, who now live below the "poverty line." An average unionized worker here makes between 400 and 500 rupees a month (\$27-35); a white-collar



worker about 600 (\$40). Bread, which used to cost 1R25 a pound has recently risen to 2Rs05. Rice, until 1977 distributed free by the half-measure every week or sold at a subsidized price of around 1R50 the measure (about a kilo), now costs 3Rs50 for the worst quality. At the insistence of the World Bank and the IMF, subsidies for dal (a high protein food), milk and textiles have also been discontinued. Small children of working-class families now drink tea without milk. Kerosene for cooking and lighting has trebled in price. Only the most destitute now receive food stamps in the amount of 30Rs a month. Fish has gone up five-fold, while Japanese and Taiwanese fishing vessels in Ceylonese waters use depth charges to blast fish to the surface and carry off the catch.

Welcome Robber Barons!

The present government has opened up more than the sea to foreigners. The new policy was perhaps best summed up by the president himself, speaking in parliament in response to an opposition critic in 1977: "Let the robber barons come." Some have—notably to the Free Trade Zone (FTZ) near Colombo's airport. Seventy-five factories are expected to set up shop in the FTZ, 30 have been built and 10 or so are currently operating. The experience to date has not been rewarding: most of the firms are textile concerns with headquarters in Korea, Hong Kong or Singapore and they have located in Sri Lanka only to take advantage of its export quotas, having exhausted their own.

Operations in the FTZ are largely restricted to assembly of component pieces (of garments or electronic devices) made elsewhere, so employment created has been minimal (perhaps 5,000-6,000 jobs) and limited almost entirely to women between 18 and 25. When the national radio announces that 10,000 shirts are being exported daily, this does not mean that the shirts are actually cut and sewn in Sri Lanka—many have merely had labels affixed to them there. But helping Singapore or Hong Kong artificially expand their quotas has meant that the quota for the fairly well developed indigenous textile industry (employing about 40,000) is automatically reduced. Several informants told me their jobs would soon be in jeopardy because of the FTZ. Meanwhile, the female FTZ workforce—touted by the government as "the cheapest labor in Asia"—earns a starting wage of 8Rs60 for an eight-hour day (about 60 cents). Some women work two shifts, although this is illegal. Trade unions are also illegal in the FTZ, but some unions are trying to help the inexperienced young women press for better working conditions (e.g., there are four toilets for 625 workers in the Polytex garment factory) and higher wages. This will be difficult. New legislation specifically stipulates that provisions of contracts with foreign firms supersede national law. The FTZ is, in effect, a country within a country with its own legislation, rules and governing council.

One original twist for encouraging foreign investment is exemplified by the Prima wheat mill scheme. The government buys wheat from Australia and gives it to Prima (a company registered in Singapore). Prima mills the wheat for nothing and gives the flour to the government. The company, however, keeps the bran, exports it, and is widely expected to recoup its entire investment in three or four years as the world price of bran goes up.

Guaranteed prices for paddy and subsidized fertilizer for farmers have not yet been touched, but eviction of tenants has been made easier and the previous sharecropping terms of one-third of the crop to the landowner has been replaced by a rent "mutually determined by the landlord and tenant." Working conditions on the tea estates are still substandard and wage differentials between men and women still run as high as 25 percent in the plantation sector (where 42 percent of the entire female workforce is employed).

The return of laissez faire.

The government argues that 30 years of import substitution and protectionist policies have not resulted in sufficient



development, so laissez-faire economics is the only remaining choice. Because local industries, in the UNP view, are inefficient, they must be exposed to foreign competition to make them shape up. This is why, at the behest of the IMF, subsidies have been abolished, import restrictions lifted, foreign exchange controls relaxed and the rupee devalued by an official 60 percent (closer to 100 percent in real terms with regard to the pound sterling). Shops are indeed full of all kinds of imported goods, partly aided by a "budget support" credit from the IMF—in reality an import fund. Local manufactures like shoes, clothing and paint are being hurt by cheap imports that will only be cheap, according to the local Chamber of Commerce, long enough to destroy indigenous industry. While exports increased only 8 percent between the first half of 1978 and the corresponding period in 1979, imports jumped by 58 percent. The balance of trade, positive in 1976-77, showed a deficit of 1.2 billion rupees in 1978; this deficit nose-dived to 7 billion rupees (\$466 million) last year.

The government seems to be counting on two safety valves—besides exports from the FTZ—to counteract this situation. One is the export of people. About 100,000 workers have left Sri Lanka for lucrative jobs in the Mid-East oilfields and they repatriate some billion rupees yearly (\$66 million), which takes care of many families. The other is the import of people—i.e., tourism. The stated goal is 500,000 visitors for 1983 (as compared to about 150,000 today; Sri Lanka's own population is 14 million) and I can only urge anyone who hopes to know the real Sri Lanka to get there quickly. Foreign investment in hotels and other tourist enterprises is strongly encouraged and the government guarantees investors that their holdings cannot be nationalized without a two-thirds majority vote

of the parliament. Unfortunately, most of the tourists have paid foreign tour operators for package holidays in their home countries and in their home currencies. If my informants are correct, only about a quarter of that money comes back to Sri Lanka, while the average tourist spends only about \$2-3 daily on extras. But tourist pressure is already being felt: bulk purchases by hotels are putting a strain on local food supplies and contributing to rising prices, while heterosexual and homosexual prostitution and begging—hitherto almost unheard of—are on the rise. Concerned Ceylonese fear their country may soon be travelling the Bangkok road.

UNP success.

One reason for the UNP's success was certainly the inability of the left to unite. Another was the large number of disaffected youths for whom the previous government was incapable of providing jobs. The Tamil minority, victimized and oppressed, voted solidly against Mrs. Bandanaraik's SLFP. People also voted for the "dharmista" ("righteous") society promised by the UNP and against growing nepotism and corruption in the previous coalition.

Sri Lanka has a strong democratic tradition, and as the Civil Rights Movement (CRM) says, "Compared with many Third World countries, we are indeed fortunate... [However], the question is not how much worse off others are elsewhere, but what room there is for improvement in our own land." The room for improvement is considerable.

Trade union activities have been effectively curtailed by the "Essential Public Services Act," which gives the president the power to ban strikes in any area he deems "essential to the life of the community"—an act the CRM calls "the most disturbing measure directed against trade union rights that this country has ever seen." Anyone who encourages anyone to incite anyone to stay away from work (are you still with me?) risks not only a stiff fine and a jail sentence, but even forfeiture of his property to the state. Trade unionists engaged in peaceful picketing have been attacked by goon squads bearing knives and bicycle chains. A particularly bloody attack took place in January within 100 yards of the police headquarters and the presidential palace. The police arrived half an hour later.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act, also passed in 1979, allows the president to ban any political party or organization that, in his opinion, advocates violence or engages in unlawful activity. There are no provisions for hearings before the ban, and no recourse afterwards. This act also gives the police extraordinary powers to arrest, detain and interrogate

suspects with no judicial supervision—"the classic circumstances," as the CRM puts it, "under which torture takes place, and it is no surprise that the Civil Rights Movement has received persistent and credible allegations of torture." New legislation also eliminates by-elections and prevents small parties from entering the political arena by imposing a cut-off point of 12.5 percent of the vote, below which no representation is allowed. The president has assumed many powers formerly exercised by parliament or the judiciary and purges have taken place in the civil service and in university staffs.

One incident that would merely be ludicrous if it did not have serious implications for freedom of expression is the Saga of the Misplaced Caption. In 1978, the *Ceylon Observer* published a photograph of a handsome young man and woman (both fully clothed and totally decent) in a motorboat. The caption read: "The president of one of the leading industrial complexes in South Korea showing the Sri Lanka Foreign Minister, Mr. A.C.S. Hameed, around the showroom of the industrial complex." Anyone but A.C.S. Hameed would doubtless have had a good laugh and forgotten about it, all the more because an editor caught the mistake, corrected it after only a few hundred copies of the paper had been printed, and even published an apology. But A.C.S. Hameed was not amused. He complained officially to parliament that people who saw the paper would think the foreign minister of Sri Lanka was "a playboy." Parliament, acting under new powers it had conferred upon itself the previous day, summoned the editor and the assistant editor before the House, questioned them and fined them (although one had not been on duty on the fateful day). Thereupon, S. Nadesan, one of the most respected lawyers in Sri Lanka with 50 years of constitutional practice behind him, analyzed the parliamentary action at the request of the CRM and published his critical conclusions in the public press. This time, parliament was not amused. A complaint about Nadesan's article was raised in the House, filed by the Attorney General and finally referred to the Supreme Court. Nadesan is to be tried and risks a fine and imprisonment.

One the whole, the UNP state appears to be doing rather a good job of protecting itself against the people. The protection of the people against the state is another matter entirely. The one favorable aspect of the present situation is that it seems to be inspiring greater cohesion of the opposition. But if the left fails to take a united stand, Sri Lanka's future as an independent, democratic country is in grave danger. As one trade union leader said to me, "I don't know if we'll survive until 1983."



*The campaign to end
occupational segregation by sex
is seen as necessary
to win full working rights
for women...and men*

EVERY WOMAN HAS THE RIGHT to a job, and every job should be open to women. The Democratic French Labor Confederation (CFDT) is trying to figure out ways to put this principle into practice at a time when women are bearing the brunt of rising unemployment. The CFDT is currently giving top priority to women workers' problems along with the fight to raise the lowest wages. It frequently comes to the same thing, since the segregated job market, in France as in the whole world over, channels most women into a dozen or so occupations that, by a funny coincidence, happen to be the lowest paid.

The CFDT, which grew out of the old Christian Workers confederation, has come a long way, from conservative Catholic social theory to the forefront of challenge to traditional sex roles at work and in the family. After dropping its religious affiliation in 1964, the CFDT radicalized at its 1970 congress, for the first time analyzing French society in terms of class struggle, coming out for socialism based on *autogestion* (self-management) and declaring that "women's liberation from all that alienates them in the present society is an indispensable condition for socialism."

In the early '70s, CFDT national secretary Jeannette Laot was a leader of the movement to legalize abortion. The CFDT insists that its policy on women is an integral part of a world view in which class struggle for socialism and women's liberation are inseparable.

However, Jeannette Laot acknowledged recently that a decade of fine words and occasional reforms had changed very little. Everyone—labor, management, government and all political parties—now agrees that women have the right to work and get paid fairly for it. But, she added, "what is striking is how hard it is to make any significant headway that really challenges job segregation, sexual division of occupations, tasks and roles between men and women today, despite occasional changes in the law."

Equal pay for equal work is guaranteed by the constitution and various laws, notably a 1972 law that also requires "equal pay for work of equal value." Employers have complied with the law to the extent of eliminating double wage scales. But the law has been used only a few times to test the concept of "equal value," which remains basically undefined.

Women continue to earn much less than men because they are bunched together in low-paid occupations and industries (like office work and clothing manufacture) or at the bottom of industries that hire both men and women. Even when there is equality in hiring, men get promoted and women stay put. Thus, in the private sector where one out of three workers is a woman, two women out of five earn less than \$9,000 per year—close to the minimum wage—whereas only one out of five men earns that little. Women are concentrated on assembly lines, or in jobs where they perform routine tasks and take orders, usually from male supervisors.

ABOUT THE SAME NUMBER of women are working in France today as at the beginning of the century, but not in the same occupations. The major shift was from farming, with a lull as women withdrew from the work force during the exodus from the countryside, into the tertiary sector, especially after World War II. The second important shift was from the declin-

FRENCH UNIONS PROMOTE M BY DIANA JOHN

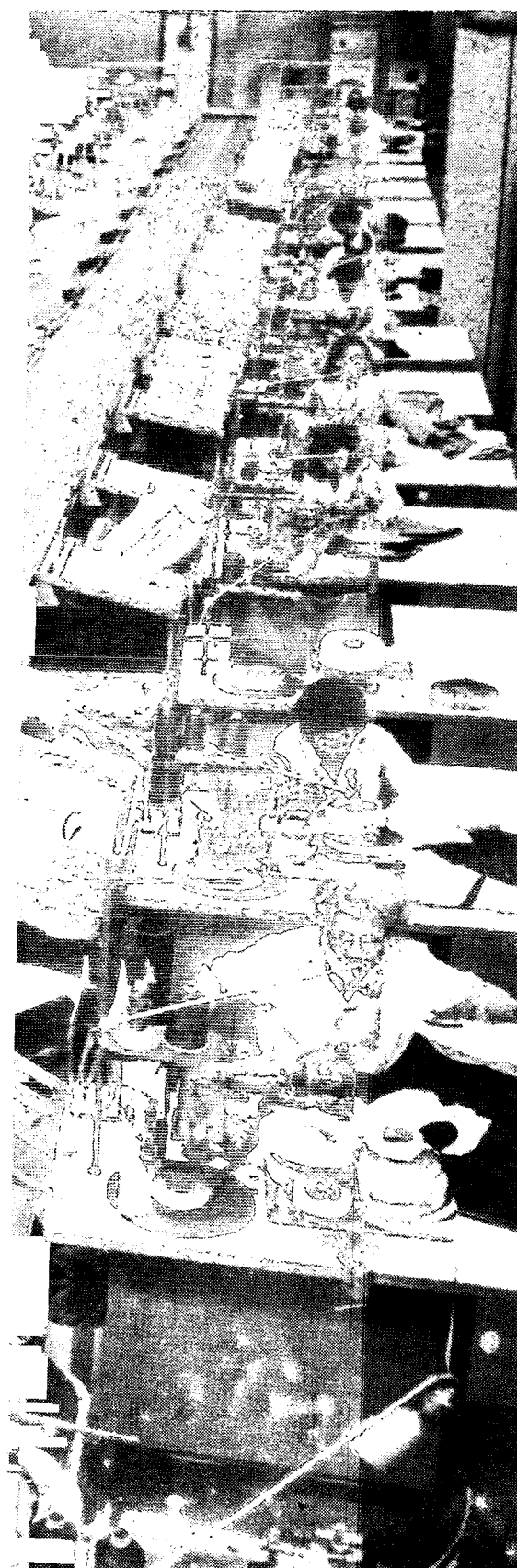


A demonstration of French women textile workers in Paris, 1978, top. Women and men working in a Citroen plant.



Didier Mallocc

XRAY STONE



Didier Mallocc

ing textile industry into the new electrical appliance and electronics industries.

Industrialization began with women workers in the textile mills and sweat shops of the clothing industry. In World War I, French women were massively recruited into heavy industry, filling up to 40 percent of the mechanical and metal workers' jobs. Creches, day care centers and rooms for nursing babies were set up. When the war was over, the women were shoved out again—roughly the same thing that happened to American women workers in World War II.

A fresh influx of women into industry occurred in the '60s, when the expanding electrical and electronics industries built plants in provincial towns with large supplies of young female—that is to say, cheap—labor. Girls with the traditional vocational high school diplomas qualifying them for the slumping textile trades were hired as unskilled labor, although their training gave them a dexterity appreciated by employers.

A 1971 bosses' study encouraged hiring more women for assembly line work since "women seem to adjust better than men to the monotony of certain jobs." And indeed technological advances from the typewriter to the electronic assembly line, which make work more automatic and boring, have repeatedly opened new fields to women.

CFDT women point out that male qualities such as physical strength earn bonuses; but feminine qualities such as patience, docility and manual dexterity, while sought by employers, are not rewarded. Can it be because the male qualities are intimidating, while the feminine qualities are not? Workers themselves are accomplices to the mystique justifying the wide range of prices at which men and women must sell their labor in order to survive.

Behind the mystique lies the law of the jungle. Women are more exploited than men because their feminine qualities, or their attachment to those qualities, discourage them from fighting as hard as men, when everything in the culture tells them they can do better by appealing (by those feminine qualities) to one man to protect them from all the rest.

The CFDT hopes that the current economic restructuring, opening up crucial areas of activity to women through the spread of computerization, may provide an historic opportunity for women at long last to assert their value on the labor market. But this will surely not happen without a struggle.

The CFDT campaign to pressure government and bosses into raising the lowest wages ties in with the concern for women, who make up the bulk of the underpaid.

Recently, the CFDT has come around to the demand for "mixity," that is for ending occupational segregation by sex, as a necessary step to attaining full working rights for women. Sweden has already taken affirmative action in this direction, for instance by subsidizing firms that train women in traditional men's jobs or men in traditional women's jobs. However, in France, where female unemployment rose sharply last year as male unemployment declined slightly, men seem to be encroaching on traditional female occupations faster than women are able to break into male preserves. Thus CFDT women are hostile to demands to impose "mixity" in grade school teaching by giving men a certain quota of posts now held by women.

Mixity begins at home, the CFDT decided at its congress last year. For women's problems to be taken into account, women must be included in all bargaining committees that deal with management.

But that is easier said than done. For one thing, with housework and childcare on top of the work day, most women don't have time or strength left for union activity. Thus the CFDT declared that women's liberation depends on their economic autonomy, and also assumes a "different sharing of tasks and roles between men and women in society." For the CFDT, a shorter work week and "free time to live a different life" means both creating new jobs and changing the

way men and women divide up work and roles, "with a consequent improvement in living and working conditions."

WHAT IS STRIKING ABOUT the CFDT's advanced positions on women is that they are a product of reflection by the leadership, starting with secretary general Edmond Maire, on society as a whole, rather than a response to pressure from rank and file women. The ideas are great, but what is missing is a real, live, passionate women's movement, such as in the U.S. and Italy (or even, on a smaller scale, in Britain and Germany), ready and eager to struggle.

In France, "bourgeois feminism" has been largely confined to small circles, not to say cliques. News of the existence of a women's liberation movement has leaked to most of the population, including the mass of working class women, mainly by way of hostile caricatures, creating a misogynist backlash felt by women without any of the defenses built up by consciousness raising practices of sisterhood.

Most people even on the left in France are still afflicted with sexist attitudes that have become impossible on the left in other advanced countries. It seems an instance of uneven development.

In strictly material terms, French women are better off than women in most other countries: they are better paid, both relative to men and in absolute terms, than American women (not to mention all the health care, paid vacations and fringe benefits), they have freer access to professions like law and medicine, day care centers may be inadequate but they exist and have existed for a long time.

But cultural conditioning in sex roles is pervasive in the land of "vive la difference." Women who have taken an active part in militant labor struggles, such as the prolonged battle to save jobs by taking over the LIP watch factory, have often found themselves with broken marriages. Neglected husbands or lovers stalk off mad, sometimes having indoctrinated the kids in how to make mama feel guilty. And the idea still persists among many women themselves that

their wages are only pin money to round out a household income.

The CFDT leadership admits that action lags far behind thought and accepts its vanguard role. French labor confederations, competing with each other in open shops, unable to force anyone to join or pay dues and consequently relatively poor, have a relationship to the working class totally unlike that of American unions. With over one million members, the CFDT is a sort of nervous system, responding to worker feeling in specific local situations, while the national leadership is a sort of think tank, sorting out and coordinating demands and priorities for efforts to influence the government and the *patronat*, or bosses' association, off and on in coordination with the much larger (over two million members) General Confederation of Labor (CGT).

One of the issues on which the CFDT disagrees with the CGT is women's retirement age. The CGT has accepted the demand for a lower retirement age (55) for women than for men, on the grounds that employed women must be especially worn out from a lifetime of combining their jobs with housework and childraising and deserve a rest. Since wives tend to be younger than husbands, couples like this arrangement for enabling them to retire at around the same time.

The CFDT, on the other hand, objects to a demand that assumes all women are wives and mothers playing their traditional sex roles. It says men and women in the same work should retire at the same age. Any parent, mother or father, should be allowed to take off two years to care for a small child and have the time counted toward retirement. The CFDT stresses that not every demand should be taken up, just because it is initially popular. In this case, the demand goes along with government's (and bosses') willingness to shove older women out of the work force in a period of unemployment, as they are a group that can be left idle with less danger to society than young men. But the unions demand policies to ensure full employment.

The CFDT's desire to fight sex role typing means it opposes measures favoring

Continued on page 22.

In and out of the home

The full-time housewife is a relatively recent and transitional phenomenon belonging to the early stages of industrialization, according to studies presented at a recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) conference in Paris on employment of women.

Women are resuming the major role in production they always had in agricultural societies, OECD reports noted. But their current opportunities are hampered by patterns established in the early stages of industrialization when large numbers of women withdrew from the labor force to devote themselves, as housewives, to domestic chores and childraising previously shared by the extended family and servants.

The April 16-17 conference noted general trends showing up in the different stages of development within the 24 OECD countries representing the industrialized capitalist world. Everywhere more married women, and notably married women with children, are wage-earners. Everywhere they are con-

centrated in particular industries and particular occupations: teaching, nursing, office work, retailing, cleaning and the food and textile industries. Everywhere these occupations are the lowest paid, so that the "equal pay for equal work" laws that exist in most countries are by no means adequate to bring women's average earnings up to men's.

Four stages were observed. Greece and Turkey illustrate the early stage of declining participation of women in productive work brought on by greater division of labor. In the second stage, young women go to work before marriage, but quit to raise children. Ireland and Spain are currently in this phase. In the third phase, as the growth of the tertiary or services sector creates a new demand for labor, large numbers of mothers go back to work, often in part-time jobs, when their children reach school age, while mothers of pre-school children still stay home. Germany, Britain and Japan are currently in this stage, in which older married women

Continued on page 22.

EDITORIAL

It's time for social control of transit

The profound auto slump, now accounting for unemployment of nearly 290,000 in the core of the industry and roughly 600,000 in related parts suppliers, has finally begun to be felt politically. President Carter's package of aids to the industry was obviously an attempt to steal a bit of thunder from the Republicans, who have capably if unconvincingly decided to run on the traditionally Democratic promise of greater employment.

Carter's assistance to the industry and its unemployed workers is minimal and unimaginative. No wonder, as the ground rule for agencies preparing proposals was that there should be no new programs and no new expenditures. The balanced budget was to be protected at all costs. That negated any effort to spend money to maintain the economy at sufficient strength to generate revenues to balance the budget. The result: no effective auto program and a \$24.4 billion jump in the expected deficit for this fiscal year (to \$60.9 billion) and a deficit of nearly \$30 billion for next fiscal year.

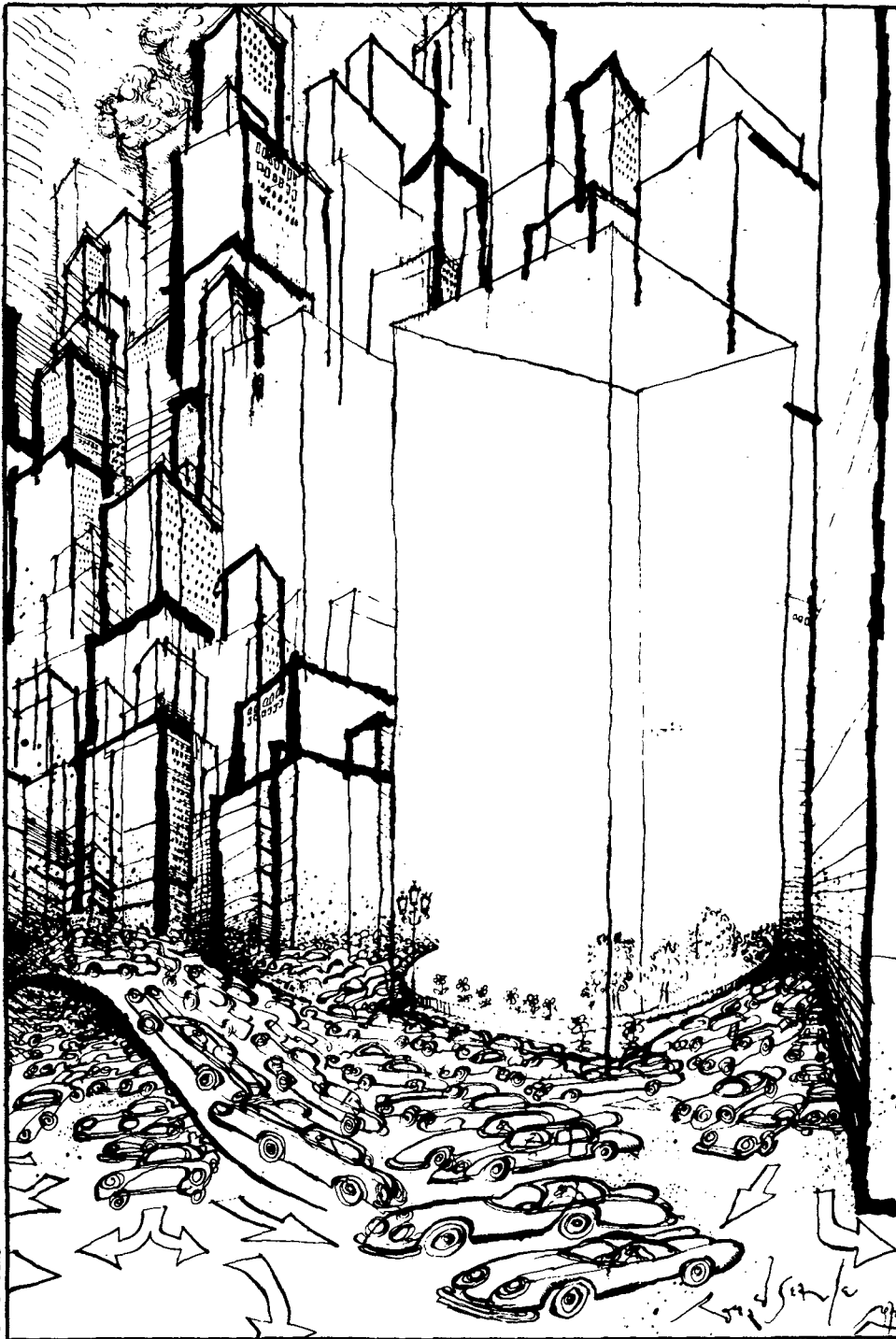
The immediately applicable parts of the Carter program are supposedly worth \$1 billion—half of that savings to the companies by reducing pollution standards, \$100 million in Economic Development Administration aid to communities to plan adjustment to long-term job loss, and the rest in loans to dealers (although the drop in interest rates since last spring has helped them already more than the special loan program). If Congress approves changes in depreciation schedules, the auto companies will reap further tax savings. The one promise for workers is support for a proposal in Congress to expand in a restricted way the trade adjustment assistance to supplier industries, whose workers are now mainly excluded.

Beyond its inadequacy, the program is ill-conceived. Occupational safety and environmental protection are compromised, future fuel efficiency standards seem likely to be curtailed, and tax breaks are offered with no strings attached. Some of the most important problems will be shifted to a new tripartite group of industry, United Auto Workers and government representatives. That is taken by top advisers to Carter as the model for future "industrial policy" fabrication. Likewise, the tricky question of imports and trade policy waits until the hearing of the International Trade Commission completes its investigation, now on a sped-up schedule.

Big government.

The most fundamentally mistaken outlook, however, is that of Ronald Reagan, and the *Wall Street Journal* editorialists who say simply that the problem is not in Japan, not in Detroit, but in Washington. Off with Joan Claybrook's head, the *Journal* cries. (Claybrook is a former Nader associate who heads the traffic safety administration). Yet government regulation has accounted for a small share of increased industry costs, has brought great public good in increased safety for drivers and workers and in environmental cleanliness (which means less cancer, heart disease and other ailments), and has even helped the industry, which would be in far more desperate shape now if there had been no fuel efficiency standards. Government planners and the public were much wiser than corporate executives on that count.

But, contrary to banners at the UAW convention, auto unemployment was not "made in Japan" either. Mainly it has been made by a deep recession, but to the extent that the Japanese have been



Ronald Seare

able to take advantage of the accelerated change in American customers' preferences, the problem was made in Detroit's corporate boardrooms. The auto executives could have seen the future unfolding and moved swiftly to small cars, emulating the kind of turnaround in corporate strategy that Volkswagen, for example, made earlier in this decade when its Beetle was getting squashed, before the Rabbit hopped back.

The auto executives, however, manifested the same kind of short-run, profit-obsessed thinking that has been destroying the American economy. You don't have to take it from a socialist newspaper: read the current *Harvard Business Review* article by Harvard Business School professors Robert Hayes and William Abernathy. They reject the corporate excuses for the comparative superiority of many European and Japanese companies, such as shortage of capital or low return on equity.

"The conclusion is painful but must be faced," they write. "Responsibility for this competitive listlessness belongs not just to a set of external conditions but also to the attitudes, preoccupations and practices of American managers. By their preference for servicing existing markets rather than creating new ones and by their devotion to short-term returns and 'management by the numbers,' many of them have effectively forsworn long-term technological superiority as a competitive weapon." It is not, however, just a difference in national styles of management that gives the Europeans and Japanese an advantage. A strong public and union role in management decisions has pushed capitalists there toward long-

er-term strategic planning.

Since international competition has finally knocked a little sense into the U.S. industry and given consumers a choice, most observers attack the notion advanced by Ford, the UAW, and some politicians that the industry needs protection from competition. But casting the issue as free trade versus protection is misleading. In an era in which there will soon be a dozen or less multinational auto manufacturers, the old nostrums about free trade no longer hold. The real issue is public control of investment and international negotiation that permits concerted regulation of multinationals whose power exceeds that of most governments.

It is curious that so many people on the left who otherwise acknowledge the limitation of the market as a means of allocation are so attached to free trade as a sacred dogma. (It is also curious how many corporations, when threatened, want to suspend their holy market.) "A market is like a tool," Charles Lindblom wrote in his widely praised *Politics and Markets*, "designed to do certain jobs but unsuited for others.... [People] use it when they should not, like an amateur craftsman who carelessly uses his chisel as a screwdriver." The question is how can we use the market's virtues and minimize its clear faults.

Planning is essential, but the tripartite committee is a bad model. It enshrines auto industry parochial interests when broader considerations are needed. It poorly provides for the possibility of conversion, but it is necessary that an auto plan be part of a general transportation plan that rescues the faltering train system, urban mass transit and bus produc-

tion, which is now well below even replacement needs. A transportation policy also has to be integrated with a policy on land use and urban planning as well as an energy policy, whose centerpiece should be conversion to renewable energy sources.

Likewise on trade policy, a tripartite commission might well opt for a narrow protectionism. (The industry has, in a way, been protected by the barrier created by the American industry since the 1940s: a peculiar large-car market that was segmented from the rest of the world.) There are grounds for maintaining a strong auto industry in the U.S. as part of a balanced economy. Consequently, it makes sense to assist the industry in its transition to small cars.

What is absolutely critical, however, is that such aid be tied to stringent conditions: controls on auto prices so as not to give the corporations windfall profits and drive up small car prices; strict fuel standards for beyond 1985 (40 miles per gallon by 1995, for example, would be a reasonable average); strict regulation of corporate export of capital and manufacturing facilities to other countries, such as Spain, Mexico or Brazil; requirements that reinvestment in the U.S. be made as a priority in areas that have suffered from auto factory shutdowns; plant closing regulations, and expanded public disclosure of corporate financial and planning regulations.

Workers also need aid in this transitional period: a comprehensive adjustment assistance and retraining program not hidden under the subterfuge of trade adjustment; a reduction in the work week and restriction on overtime to minimize job loss as the industry changes its production processes; worker control over the new computerized technology and robots; industry-wide seniority; and "portability" of pensions from job to job, for example.

If the industry needs more capital to make its transition, then the assistance should not come in the form of tax breaks, which give aid to the rich GMs as well as the needy American Motors or Chryslers. Rather, there should be calculated public equity investments that bring with them public control. Who else would invest billions in a business and get nothing in return? Only the sucker U.S. taxpayer, thanks to a corporate-dominated government.

If tax breaks are the only politically viable option, then they, too, must be linked to the kind of controls and conditions that import relief would entail. The big mistake with Chrysler was not bailing it out, but rather not making a sufficient public plunge to make the company viable and in the process put it under substantial public management to guarantee more farsighted, accountable planning.

Finally, the government can take over—at scrap prices—abandoned industrial facilities and through its own public corporation, with substantial worker control as well, convert them whenever possible to manufacture competitive cars (such as the Department of Transportation's prototype moderately-priced, fuel-efficient safety car that beats almost any Detroit product now offered), buses or other mass transit and railroad supplies, or such auto-related products as the fuel-saving heat/electricity "cogeneration" units based on an auto engine (such as Fiat already makes).

Only a broad assertion of public interest, public planning and public control can save the auto industry and its workers while simultaneously serving the needs of the American people. ■

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

ARROGANCE?

YOUR ARTICLE "INDEPENDENCE Day" was both snide and foolish. It suggests something rather unpleasant, namely, if you scratch the American bourgeois leftist you come up with an arrogant bourgeois, who despises the "vulgar" middle American, the worker, the poor man, who, horror of horrors, loves his country.

It is easy to forget that America has a revolutionary tradition and sneer at those who still believe in its promise. Perhaps in an emotional sense, a spiritual sense, the "fools" shown on pages 12 and 13 have remembered something you have forgotten: America is not just the country of Nixon and Vietnam, but also the country of Jefferson, Paine and Thoreau. You have merely shown the poor and the powerless and mocked them and their illusions. How terribly radical.

—John A. Kelleher
Somerville, N.J.

Editor's note: We're not "radicals" (whatever that may be), and we did not intend the pictures to be a put-down. We're sorry if they appeared that way.

DON'T MISS A BEAT

I'M A RETIRED LIFE-LONG WEEKLY newspaper editor. I like your publication better than I do *The Nation*, for which I've subscribed for many years. The reason is you've kept your sentence structure simple and short. Keep up the good work—and quit skipping all those weeks in the summer time!

—John Lyman
Los Angeles

IF THIS IS TRUE

I'VE DECIDED AGAINST RENEWING MY subscription to *ITT* because I've learned that in recent months you've suppressed, then suspended altogether, articles on Indochina by Wilfred Burchett. If this is true, you have followed the example of the other "independent" left newsweekly, *The Guardian*, in denying your readers the dispatches of one of the most experienced observers of Indochina affairs.

For 26 years Burchett has covered the Vietnamese national liberation struggle. He reported on the 1954 Geneva Conference when I was a sixth grader in Chicago, and had never heard of Vietnam. He has contributed more to our understanding of national liberation movements than possibly any other journalist.

It is a sign of the continued immaturity of much of the radical press in this country that Burchett has, in effect, been "blacklisted." (Nor, of course, is he published in any U.S. newspaper regularly, only in the British and European press.)

Why have you stopped publishing articles by Burchett? You owe your readers an explanation.

Is it because it's quite fashionable on the left to be anti-Soviet, and therefore cool and suspicious toward any nation perceived by you to be in the Soviet camp?

Is it because Burchett reports what Vietnamese leaders may say to him in discussions on their policies and events in the area? If so, it is also true that he

reports events in Vietnam that put Vietnam in an unfavorable light (see "Vietnamese deny they persecuted ethnic Chinese," *ITT*, July 18, 1979).

Please, let your readers decide what they think about the Vietnamese perspective on the conflict with China and the U.S. Don't exercise prior censorship. We so rarely get to read anything about Vietnam's point of view. We read exhaustively about China's perspective (three worlds), Sihanouk's "comeback," the Carter administration hard line, etc.

World events make many tortuous turns and we are not always ready for them. China is now an ally of the U.S. and both pursue a policy of isolating and weakening Vietnam. I am dismayed that *ITT* decided to drop Burchett's reports and thereby further contribute, by keeping us ignorant, to the trend in this country to isolate Vietnam.

Recently at a conference in Canada, I heard Burchett speak about changes in Vietnam's economic policies and the problems of reconstructing a whole society in Cambodia. It is too bad your readers have been deprived of this information and perspective. Burchett is researching a book on the Vietnam-Cambodia-China triangle, because, as he puts it, "these events have no parallel in history, and it is imperative that we understand them." I for one eagerly await this book. It may not be the final word on the subject, but it will undoubtedly contribute toward our understanding of some of the formerly unimaginable events in Indochina in 1975-80.

—Anne Froines
Somerville, Mass.

Editor's note: When Wilfred Burchett left THE GUARDIAN two years ago, we were pleased to be able to hire him as a correspondent for ITT. But because of our shaky financial condition we were able to do so only on the basis of a special fund being set up to pay him. That was done, but enough money was raised only for eight months. Burchett started writing for us in January 1979. By August we had used up the money raised and the people who had raised it for us were unable to raise more, so we had no choice but to stop using Burchett.

We never "suppressed" articles on Indochina by Burchett, though we did not publish everything he sent. Some articles were out of date by the time we got them, others were repetitious. We do not print everything that is written for us by any of our correspondents, because our space is severely limited and we have to publish the more timely

and informative articles. Our judgment may not always be correct, but we must rely on our judgment.

We are not anti-Soviet, but we are critical of the Soviet Union. We are not any more suspicious of the nations in the Soviet camp than we are of any other nations, and, in general, we have been sympathetic to Vietnam, and to Cuba, though we attempt not to be uncritical. Since Burchett stopped writing for us we have published several articles on Indochina, both by Chris Mullin, our British correspondent, and others. Those who have read them should not be entirely ignorant on the subject.

ONE WHO IS IN IT

IHOPE THAT JOHN JUDIS' REPORTAGE of the Citizens Party's "5 Percent Solution" (*ITT*, July 2) does not represent editorial opinion. It no more constitutes news than any other PR hand-out from a political organization desperately competitive for votes. He ably reflects arguments of the party's new campaign czar, Bob Zimmerman, a recent convert well remunerated by the monied interests, but he is hardly candid about what has been going on in the party. Pardon me for wondering if Stanley Weiss, the party's notably philanthropic treasurer, has come to your rescue too.

Judis mentions opposition to the current state of affairs, but glances over it as if he has more significant facts to relate. He does not seek to explore why so many activists around the country have become disillusioned. I was active in the party from its genesis in the East Bay last November and was elected a delegate to the April Founding Convention, supposedly the highest body of the party, empowered to set its course. Aware of an elitist tendency among the national leadership, I arrived with considerable apprehension. The dirty tricks played by the well-endowed Commoner faction on their "grassroots" opponents, the deceptions that they tried to pass off on the unaligned like myself, exceeded my fears. They appeared to give the convention the platform that most of the delegates wanted in order to win easy acceptance of Commoner, his candidates for the national leadership and their strategy, but withdrew or radically revised the core features about social ownership and draft resistance after us delegates had gone home because these planks threatened the financial interests of the party's most substantial backers, who were quiet on the floor but loud in the backrooms, and the size of the November vote. No doubt they counted on the membership's continued ignorance of what transpired, plus the masochistic desperation of a hardcore for a left party of any kind whatsoever. Zimmerman's lack of respect for the membership is indicative of what is wrong. I refer to the arrogance of his remark, quoted by Judis: "While the Citizens Party isn't the perfect vehicle, given the people who are in it right now..." So much for any hopes for party democracy.

Fortunately, activists on the left are not that stupid. They are rapidly learning from experience that it is just another capitalist party—and a very marginal one at that. As a result of the cynical manipulation of people's hopes, it is already beginning to collapse on itself. The national campaign has been forced to pay workers because there are not enough volunteers. In California, at least, the Socialist Workers Party is doing much better. It is embarrassing that the party has not achieved ballot status in more than seven states, only two of them particularly populous. Stewart Mott's millions cannot buy them the basis of trust the Commoner leadership has destroyed.

I hope the Citizens Party quickly resigns itself to oblivion so that people on the democratic left can get around to building a socialist party from the grassroots up. Keep on networking, brothers and sisters!

—Garrett Lambrev
Oakland, Calif.

DISCO SCHMISCO

ICAN CONJURE UP NO SYMPATHY FOR the disco music Tom Smucker refers to as "a sub-culture once more." I have my doubts that disco was ever a sub-culture, and am highly suspicious that disco came about simply because the market created it. Sub-culture, indeed! My 10-year-old daughter is in her room right now listening to disco music loudly on her radio. It has been sold to her just as sugared cereals are sold to her on the Saturday morning cartoon shows.

I resent it. And I resent somebody trying to compare the plight of disco's drop on the radio charts to the ignored folksinger. Folk music is folk music because it exists outside and in spite of the market. Woody Guthrie may have been as influential as Chuck Berry and the Beatles, but his songs have stayed with us by word of mouth—not by radio and record sales methods. Guthrie's records were sold after the fact. (They still can't be found in most stores.)

Yes, banjos are folk music and synthesizers are not. Most people couldn't afford to even rent a synthesizer. Banjos, you can make or buy for almost nothing. The distinction should be as obvious as the answer to why disco and other chart-topping music comes under fire by the left and defenders of folk culture.

—John O'Connor
Seattle

JAMAICA SI, CUBA NO!

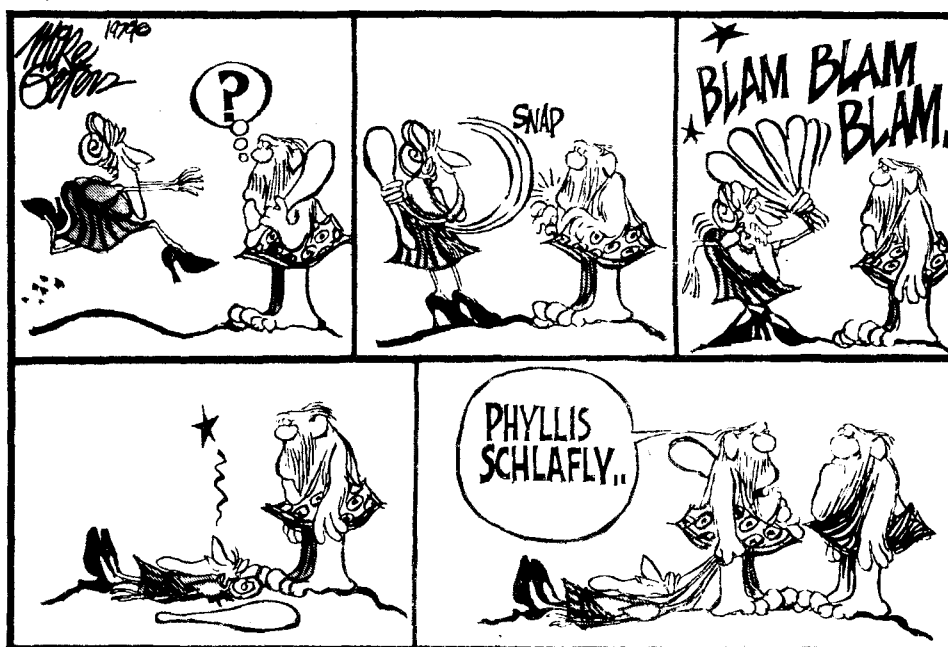
WITH REFERENCE TO EDWARD DREW Gourley's letter (*ITT*, July 16), I fail to see how the phrase "faithful to the benevolent dictator who led them out of bondage" could make sense to anyone but a fool. Perhaps Castro's rule is preferable to the usual military-multinational coalition, but a dictatorship, no matter how "benevolent," does not make socialism. It does not even make for the possibility of socialism.

No system or ideology can prevent conflict and injustice. Depriving people of the right to speak freely, depriving people of the right to publish freely, and depriving people of the right to organize on their own behalf—running a dictatorship in other words—almost guarantees injustice whether the trains run on time or not.

Edward Gourley can worship Castro if he pleases. I prefer Jamaica, with all its problems, as a democratic alternative to any kind of Third World dictatorship.

—Robert M. Roman
Chicago

Editor's Note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.



Si

Continued from page 7.

fundamental reorganization of our agricultural system that makes both alcohol and food production economically feasible. This could be accomplished by growing different crops (instead of corn, soybeans and hay that are the dominant livestock feeds, which as a group occupy two-thirds of U.S. cropland), such as sugarbeets or Jerusalem artichokes (a type of sunflower). These plants could yield large quantities of alcohol and as much livestock nutrition in the fermentation byproduct as corn or soybeans.

The Center for the Biology of Natural Systems now calculates that one-third to one-half of current U.S. gasoline requirements could be replaced by alcohol from crops raised on existing cropland with no reduction in food production. It is also possible to use tree crops, such as the honey locust, combined with forage crops to produce alcohol and livestock feed from hilly, marginal lands.

Conservationists have been worried about extending farmlands in order to produce alcohol, especially if crop residues are burned to fuel alcohol stills, since soil erosion is already such a serious problem. (The U.S. loses 15-20 tons per acre per year on much of its cropland, a loss three to four times the soil replenished each year through buildup from crop residues.) But more productive crops may not require additional cropland, tree agriculture can safely extend the cropland base, and crops could be bred to produce more unharvested stover or straw in addition to fermentable starches and sugars so that the soil could be replenished and the boilers fired. Also, minimum tillage practices already in wide use can reduce both soil



erosion and the fuel needed by tractors in cultivation.

Other sources of biomass fuel production, such as forestry residues and city waste, are also likely to become available once biochemical processes to break down tough cellulose in many plants are fully developed. Despite some disadvantages as a fuel, methanol—another form of alcohol—could be produced through gasification of these products rather than fermentation, yielding more energy from the same quantity of biomass at a slightly lower cost.

We cannot rely solely on more fuel-efficient vehicles to solve our liquid fuels

problem until the time—maybe 50 years from now—when we can convert the transportation system to solar electricity. If we want to cut oil consumption on a significant scale, we will need alcohol production from all possible biomass sources if we are to minimize the environmentally destructive and occupationally hazardous use of coal, converted into methanol or synthetic oil. We will also need alcohol as an octane booster for gasoline.

The choice between alcohol from coal or from biomass will not be dictated solely by competitive market forces. The cost of production from either source is close enough that non-market political choices will tip the scales. Expanding coal production will create social, environmental and health costs along with boomtown problems in the mining areas. Biomass for alcohol will require changed agricultural policies to stabilize crop prices and minimize soil erosion. The final decision is also between a renewable energy technology with dispersed ownership of resources and a nonrenewable technology that will further concentrate capital and control within a few giant corporations.

No

Continued from page 7.

tion, the energy yield would be equivalent to only 93 billion gallons of gasoline. (The U.S. alone consumes 110 billion gallons of motor fuels and a total of 268 billion gallons of petroleum each year.)

Obviously, the world can grow more of these crops by more efficient agriculture (which has usually meant concentration of land ownership, use of petroleum-fueled machinery, and heavy fixes of fertilizer, insecticides and herbicides), by putting more land in production, or by displacing other crops. Can we imagine the world producing twice as much of these crops to provide the fuel to run America's cars? Or even 10% more of these crops to put America on a gasohol economy?

Even if producing enough alcohol to put U.S. vehicles on gasohol would be very difficult, shouldn't we be good Americans and support a gasohol program since "every little bit helps"? There are several reasons why we shouldn't.

First, our soil is a non-renewable resource. Soil loss rates throughout the grain and sugar producing areas of the U.S. exceed 10 tons per acre per year, which is well above the rate of soil formation. At a soil loss rate of 15 tons per acre per year, each gallon of corn-produced alcohol represents 110 pounds of soil lost. The next time you pull up to the pump to fill up with 15 gallons of gasohol, ask for 165 pounds of soil. Declining soil fertility can be offset only by increased energy inputs—more fertilizer and greater fuel use. In addition, an alcohol fuels program will force expansion of agriculture into now idle land. Often this land is steep, has soils with a poor ability to resist erosion, and has poor

fertility, requiring large fertilizer inputs.

Gasohol doesn't make energy sense. Alcohol fuel production from agricultural products essentially amounts to a conversion of petroleum, coal, natural gas, hydro, and nuclear energy into alcohol fuel energy. Admittedly, the immediate energy problem in the U.S. is a vehicle fuel problem. But the most obvious opportunity for large energy conservation in the U.S. is also vehicle fuel. Using existing alcohol plants, the energy required to grow the grain and convert it into alcohol is more than the energy content of the alcohol.

Gasohol advocates often propose conversion of extensive areas of U.S. farmland to sugarbeet, sugar cane, or sweet sorghum crops to maximize alcohol production. Yet another recent study indicates that producing alcohol from sugar cane under U.S. agricultural conditions is likely to yield only 20 percent more energy than the fossil fuel energy inputs for crop production and processing.

Gasohol is a bad deal economically. At \$2.70 for a bushel of corn, the raw material costs alone are \$1.43 for the alcohol equivalent of a gallon of gasoline. Crude oil at \$30 a barrel has a raw material cost of 67 cents a gallon. If gasohol is such a good bargain, why does it sell for more than ordinary gasoline in the Midwest, even though it has high tax subsidies? Also, if a large alcohol fuels program is undertaken by the U.S., we will become an importer of grain and sugar instead of OPEC oil, but that will also mean that we will outbid the poor peasant from Bangladesh for grain, even though he eats only 5 percent as many calories as an American car "eats."

Finally, the environmental impacts of producing liquid fuels from agricultural crops will be far higher than producing them from tar sands, coal, or even from oil shale. For example, an extremely large project in Alberta, Syncrude Canada Ltd.'s mine and syn-crude plant, produces 105,000 barrels of syn-crude a day, starting from tar sands. This is not much oil. A day's production would supply only a modestly large refinery. But the corn yield from 10 million acres is required to produce an equivalent amount of alcohol. That's about the corn acreage in Illinois. The Alberta mine excavates 70 million tons of tar sand a year; the soil loss from the Illinois corn land is about 150 million tons per year. One other comparison: the energy represented by the coal mined in Illinois each year is five times the energy of the Illinois corn crop. The energy, chemical, and machinery inputs used to produce the Illinois corn crop are far larger than the inputs for the Alberta tar sands project or for the Illinois coal industry.

But Brazil is pushing pure alcohol, as well as gasohol, as a motor fuel, and with a lot of success. Why can't we do it? The answer is this: Brazil has about the same acreage as the coterminous U.S., but about half the population, only one-fifteenth the per capita energy consumption, and only 5 percent as many vehicles. Furthermore, much of Brazil is suited for growing a unique crop, sugar cane. To process cane, the stalks must be brought from the field, and the sugar juices squeezed out. The residue remaining has already been collected and provides a suitable fuel to operate the alcohol plant. This is a basically different situation from corn stover or wheat straw left on the land to help maintain the organic content of the soil and to reduce erosion.

People in the plains know we'll need the productive capacity of the soil for centuries. A popular slogan on the plains is "No Nukes in the Breadbasket," recognizing the large loss of agricultural productivity that could follow reactor accidents. Yet conversion to agriculture-based fuels, including alcohol, probably is a greater long-term threat to a sustainable agriculture. We need to start serious conservation efforts. In 1979, 85 percent of the cars sold in the U.S. had fuel economy ratings less than half that of the most economical car available. If the U.S. can drastically reduce its use of motor fuels as its petroleum production falls, then agriculture-based fuels may be a sensible way to use up the remaining productivity of our soils.

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ROBERTA LYNCH

Cuba's current refugees: Part of an old tradition

FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS A tiny island off the coast of Florida has found itself shouldering a far greater share of the weight of contemporary history than its size or resources would seem to warrant.

When Cuba became the first nation in the Western Hemisphere to effect a socialist revolution, it was suddenly thrust upon the world stage—and it has remained there ever since.

It quickly became a lightning rod for American animosity, for its adoption of an alternative model of development—when it had seen the fruits of capitalism at such close hand—was taken as both insult and threat in U.S. ruling circles.

This hostility took the form of a nearly incessant barrage of propaganda aimed at discrediting the revolution and its leadership.

It also took the form of economic and even military assault. The most notorious example was the U.S. supported Bay of Pigs invasion. But, by far the most damaging has been the economic blockade, which has distorted Cuba's development process and handicapped its role in the world market.

Almost overnight, this small, underdeveloped country had become a vital pawn in international power struggles—particularly in the U.S.-Soviet Cold War. It is difficult to overestimate the strains that this placed on the development of Cuban socialism.

The Cubans have been forced to proceed with their every mistake spotlighted in the harsh glare of U.S. propaganda. As a result, both social and economic policy decisions—many of which are matters of temporary necessity rather than eternal principle—are constantly subjected to a scrutiny that very few nations' internal workings must bear. It is a scrutiny that cannot help but provide an artificial pressure on both the government and the people themselves. At stake, it seems, is not only their own economic stability and social harmony, but the entire issue of the possibility of creating a just and equitable society.

Given this knotty past, it should not be surprising that the recent exodus of refugees from Cuba has produced such strong reactions on all sides. However, stripped of all its ideological endowments, this current migration is a relatively understandable, if not altogether comforting development.

It was stimulated largely by the combination of factors that has produced most large-scale migrations: economic hardship and the promise of new possibility.

Economic hardship is always a relative experience. Cuba—unlike most underdeveloped countries—now provides the overwhelming majority of its population with the basic necessities of life. Compared to many Latin American countries—and certainly compared to its pre-revolutionary days—it is a well-off nation.

However, there are other comparisons to be made. Cuba has certainly not produced anything akin to the consumer wonderlands of advanced industrial societies. And the last decade has seen an increasingly educated and sophisticated population—and consequently one with higher expectations—encounter repeated economic difficulties. The result may not be real hardship, but it is definitely not real material comfort. For those who were part—even barely a part—of the middle class prior to the revolution as well as for some young people who cannot remember the widespread pover-



ty of that earlier time, it has apparently been particularly frustrating.

Whether or not those who left represent the most politically reactionary elements—those unwilling to sacrifice for the greater good—as some claim, or whether they represent political dissidents—those unwilling to conform to social pressure—as others argue, seems to me a secondary issue in this case. For what they most clearly represent, from all accounts, are those for whom immediate and individual economic interests take precedence over national or ideological allegiances.

Every underdeveloped society is a parent of such phenomena, and it is particularly strange for Americans to be making such a big deal of all of this. After all, scores of our forebears left Ireland not for anything as exalted as opposition to religious oppression, but for something as elemental as the failure of a potato crop. And from Italy, Germany and Sweden they came almost invariably not to make their freedom, but to make their fortune.

It is, however, thoroughly understandable why the U.S. government is reacting with such vehemence, for its longstanding vendetta against the Cuban revolution is coinciding with rapid—and threatening—change throughout the Caribbean. All over Latin and Central America Cuba has increasingly come to be regarded as an important alternative model of development, even by many political moderates. As the left has gained influence in Nicaragua, in Jamaica, in Guyana, in El Salvador, there has been a growing fear in U.S. ruling circles that a new game of dominos is going on right in our own backyard. Given the wealth of U.S. interests and investments south of the border, it becomes particularly essential to discredit both the economic achievements and the political viability of Cuban society. The avalanche of anti-Cuban propaganda in the wake of the migration is but the logical extension of this need.

Unfortunately, many progressive people in this country, though skeptical of the salesman, have still bought the goods. And even within the left there is much talk of the "failure of socialism."

I think, however, that it would be more accurate to talk about the failure of an illusion.

Marxist art critic John Berger said in a recent interview: "One of the great illusions of the left is to believe that everything can always be resolved, that one doesn't actually often have to live perhaps a whole lifetime with contradictions."

Many American leftists—bringing the weight of their own need for inspiration to the Cuban situation—have been particularly prey to this illusion. We (I truthfully cannot exempt myself from such tendencies) thought that Cuba's conscious commitment to transforming not just economic structures, but human beings would exempt it from the problems that have plagued other socialist societies. We did not expect economic miracles, but we did expect people who

would become something akin to a new breed of saints—who would willingly, even joyfully, tolerate sacrifice for the sake of the greater good.

Illusions necessarily breed disillusionment; but they need not breed despair. Realistically speaking, the current Cuban exodus doesn't mean that the revolution has been either failure or sham. Rather, it offers some important insights about the nature of revolution.

It argues that each socialism is a historical process, shaped by the conditions and culture of a particular nation, and constructed over generations of what is necessarily a "trial and error" approach.

Given this, it is inevitable that there will be mistakes—some of them completely unjustifiable in our eyes perhaps. But what is to be feared is not errors, but entrenchment—the freezing of the process—not the failure to achieve the ideal, but the abandonment of the ideal.

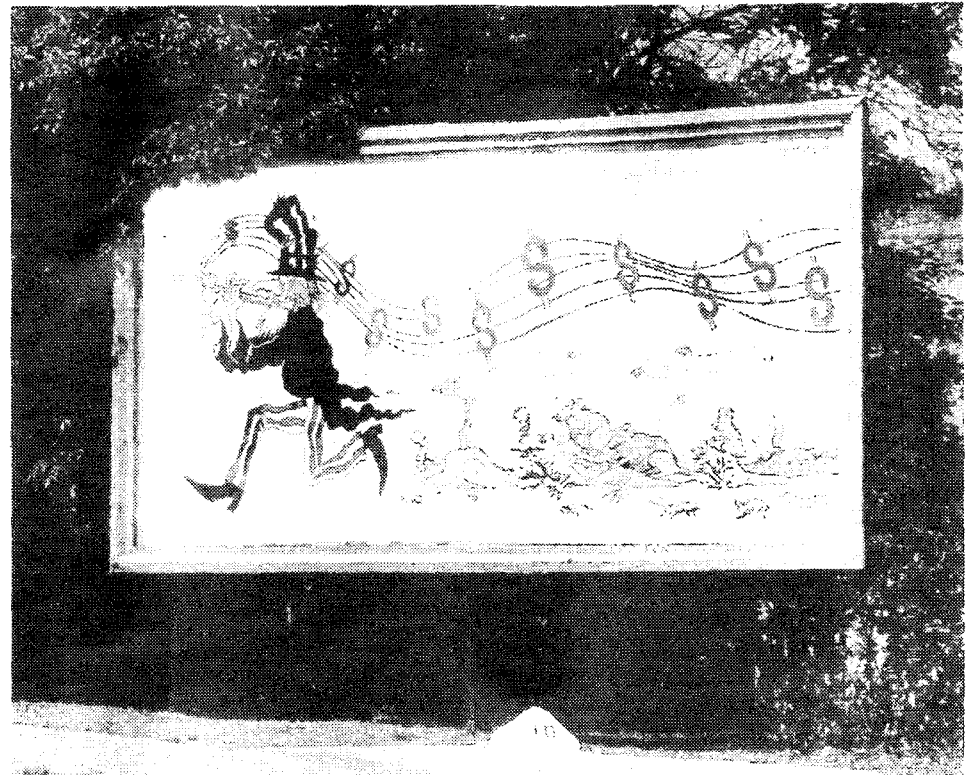
Cuba, it seems to me, by the very act of opening its borders to the disgruntled

and its political system to the questions their departure necessarily poses, has indicated its commitment to keeping this process alive.

It remains one of the great social experiments of our lifetimes. And our recognition of its flaws need not undermine our support for its achievements or cast us into cynicism about its prospects. Rather, such an awareness can provide a more balanced understanding of the complexity and the difficulty of the tasks it faces.

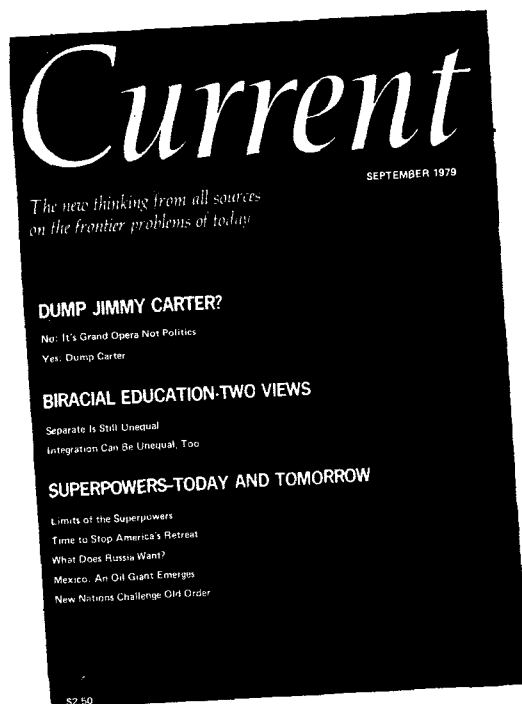
There's something else that John Berger said that stays in my mind: "I happen to believe that hope and disappointment can perfectly well exist together without adding up to absurdity." It's a lesson that most of us have learned only imperfectly, but one that seems particularly important in thinking about Cuba today.

Roberta Lynch is active in the New American Movement, a democratic socialist organization.



Cuban billboard blames American Pied Piper for emigration blues.

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Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan

BIOGRAPHY

Keller and Teacher, tale of two souls at one

Helen and Teacher: The Story of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan Macy

By Joseph P. Lash.
Radcliffe Biography Series (A Merloyd Lawrence Book), Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, \$17.50, 750 pp.

By Jane Marcus

Hope was the one virtue we didn't mock in my girls' Catholic school in Boston in the '50s. Faith we continually challenged. And love was a mystery. But hope was our bread and butter, and we clung to it as Anne Sullivan did in the poorhouse where she spent her childhood. We devoured Anne Frank's diary and Helen Keller's autobiography.

Joseph Lash's book comes at exactly the right moment, when we need help to outwit the national hopelessness. Recent revivals of love and faith have seemed more like vice than virtue. Let us hope that hope will have her heyday once again, and that there are teachers clever enough to feed their students bread and butter biographies like this one.

Lash, the prize-winning author of *Eleanor and Franklin*, is a biographer in the Victorian tradition where the lives of the great serve double duty as the history of our times and the catechism of moral and social struggle for

human progress. It is not only nostalgia for the earnest days when hope flourished in America that drives the reader on through almost 1000 pages of daunting double biography. It is well, every once in a while, to re-examine our heroines. Once Lash has scraped off all the whitewash, dug up all the dirt, Helen Keller comes out cleaner than ever. Anne Sullivan's halo is tarnished and tipped; she is all the more appealing to a modern audience because of her rage and self-destructiveness.

Annie Sullivan's childhood was so horrible that she never told Helen Keller about it in all the years of their intimacy. Driven out of Limerick, Ireland, by the potato famine of 1847, Thomas Sullivan settled in Springfield, Mass., where his crippled, tubercular wife gave birth to five unhealthy children, including the half-blind, hot-tempered Annie. The red-haired illiterate drunkard beat his "little devil of a daughter," and the blow he struck her on the day of her mother's burial in a potter's field shaped her life: "A fire of hatred blazed up in me which burned for many years." She and her crippled brother were taken in briefly by an aunt and uncle. But when their father failed to contribute to their support, they were packed off to the poorhouse in Tewksbury.

Poverty, filth and disease were Annie's teachers for six years. Among the crippled, the insane and the criminal, she clung to her brother Jimmy until he died. "God's curse be on them that have stones for hearts," she prayed, later recalling everything about this institution as "indecent, cruel, melancholy." Doctors worked on her eyes and she overworked them on books. When a committee came to investigate the infamous poorhouse, Annie badgered them to send her to school. In 1880 she entered Perkins Institution for the Blind.

The rebellious Annie was always waiting for the blow that all her father-figures, mentors and teachers would eventually deal her. To her proud and original mind there was little difference between the Tewksbury poorhouse and Perkins Institution, between Radcliffe College and the American Foundation for the Blind—all oppressed her while pretending to care for her.

Awakening.

Helen Keller always celebrated the day her "Teacher" arrived in Tusculum, Alabama, as "the birthday of my soul." Annie transformed a kicking, screaming little monster without sight, hearing or speech into the brilliant writer and crusader for human rights, Helen Keller. The

breakthrough came when Annie spelled into Helen's hand the word for water. Both teacher and student described the experience, using the image of clay, transformed by a sculptress into humanity.

For Annie, I suspect, the experience was one of proving, by molding her "clay" into a creature beautiful, true and good, that human nature was not as evil as her childhood had led her to believe, that original sin could be atoned for.

Annie Sullivan was not a charming woman. When still a student at Perkins, Annie had tangled with Boston Brahmin ladies bountiful. She had nothing but scorn for Julia Ward Howe, author of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." What kind of person, asked the insulted Annie, worked for the abolition of slavery and votes for women, and yet treated her Irish servant girls like dirt? She tangled with the same types at Radcliffe. To Annie they were all like the landlords who had destroyed her own and so many Irish families, despite their feminism and abolitionism.

No two women could have been more different than were Annie and Helen Keller. Annie alternated between arrogance at her colossal achievements and abnegation, self-hatred and despair. She challenged authority, then bowed her head for the blows. Yet her student, her prize, was sweetly studious, charming but firm, idealist and revolutionary. Helen Keller became not only the fierce pacifist and feminist we know, but also a left-wing socialist, supporter of Bill Haywood, a member of the IWW. I'm sure that "Why I Became a Socialist" was left out of my copy of Helen Keller's autobiography.

Red-baiting.

Philip Foner's *Helen Keller: Her Socialist Years* (N.Y., International, 1967) already explored this subject and Lash is generous in his acknowledgements. But the book has been widely reviewed with little or no mention of Keller's left-wing activism, her admiration for Marx or the fact that she was hounded by red-baiters who tried unsuccessfully to get the American Foundation for the Blind to repudiate her. Her approach to rehabilitation for the handicapped was derived from a study of Marxist economics and she insisted that the blind be educated for work, self-support and self-respect.

In 1912 Helen hung a red flag in her room, chafing at the thought that her audience laughed when she wrote as a socialist, wanting instead sentimental and optimistic pieties. "Let every man get off his fellow man's back," she wrote and contributed money and time to the Lawrence mill strike. "If they are denied a living wage, I am also defrauded. While they are industrial slaves I cannot be free."

She joined the Big Bill Haywood faction of the Socialist Party, which advocated "direct action, and was very close to the Wobblies leadership, later writing an introduction to Arturo Giovannitti's poems, *Arrows in the Gale* (1914). When *The New York Times* editorialized on the "contemptible" red flag, she replied defiantly: "I am no wor-

shipper of cloth of any color, but I love the red flag and what it symbolizes to me and other socialists. I have a red flag hanging in my study, and if I could I should gladly march it past the offices of the *Times* and let all the reporters and photographers make the most of the spectacle."

Helen was on the side of the



Socialist ideas appealed to Keller's deep commitment to the underdog.

militant suffragists and urged the mild Americans to follow the English example: "Mrs. Pankhurst is a great leader. The women of America should follow her example. They would get the ballot much faster if they did. They cannot hope to get anything unless they are willing to fight and suffer for it. But I am a militant suffragette because I believe suffrage will lead to Socialism and to me Socialism is the ideal cause."

In writing, critics thought, she was Annie Sullivan's puppet; in preaching socialism she was John Macy's puppet. Lash admits that Macy, a young Harvard-educated poet, brought her to Marx, but "only because his ideas appealed to her deeply emotional nature and to a commitment to the underdog that long preceded his appearance on the scene." Helen called her beloved Annie a "weak sister" because of her conservatism about women and workers. And she was still waving her red flag long after Macy had lapsed into drunkenness and despair.

Lash amasses much material. It remains for an imaginative biographer to impose a thesis. We also need to recall that Helen and Annie spoke to each other in the language of touch. The meaning of this for their lives is hardly explored here, the depths of their physical and emotional relations hardly plumbed.

The story of Helen and Teacher is, for me, an anti-Frankenstein myth. Mary Shelley imagined male jealousy of motherhood wreaking death and destruction by trying to create life out of death. Annie Sullivan was an angel of deliverance and hope for one spirit imprisoned in darkness. The evils of life were dispelled for her by every daily proof of Helen's natural goodness. The poet Richard Watson Gilder captured the mythic quality of their lives when he wrote of their first meeting that it would take a Blake to paint the picture of those two souls rushing toward each other.

Jane Marcus is a Chicago writer and critic. Her edition of Elizabeth Robins' women's suffrage novel *The Convert* (1907) will be published by the Feminist Press in July.

SEX

Chasing the quick swim

Thy Neighbor's Wife
By Gay Talese
Doubleday, \$14.95, 550 pp.

By Kate Ellis

An initial and propelling insight of the second wave of feminism was the discovery that the "sexual revolution" of the late '50s and '60s had been a revolution by and for one sex only. At best it gave with one hand and took with the other, offering women more opportunities to have sex, but extending male control over their intimate lives.

My job as a reviewer would be easy if Talese were an uncritical adherent, in this book that claims to be "about America and about sex," of a consumer-oriented, more-is-better approach to his subject. The book raises more complicated questions than that, though there are certainly infuriating omissions. It approaches from the other side an issue that the recent campaign against pornography has thrust into the realm of serious socialist and feminist discussion: what do we mean, in the realm of sexuality, when we talk about freedom?

Talese pursues this question along two roads that weave back and forth across each other in his book. One traces the struggles of various pornographic writers and publishers, from Maurice

Girodias and D.H. Lawrence to William Hamling, who gave us *Lust Pool*, *Shame Agent*, and a lavishly illustrated edition of the report of the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography.

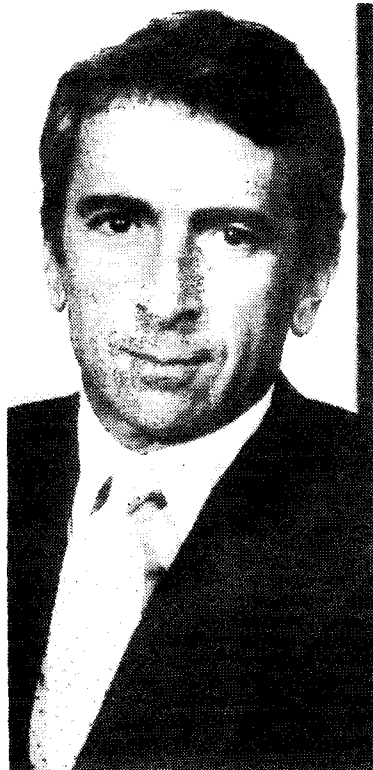
I use the word "pornographic" to cover the whole waterfront of explicit media sex because I agree with some of the defendants in the court cases Talese describes that distinctions between pornography and "erotica" are in practice distinctions of taste and class. In general, I would say that efforts to whittle down "pornography" to include, for instance, only representations of violence against women (thereby shifting the problem over to the equally difficult one of defining "violence") tend to obfuscate underlying attitudes rather than clarifying them.

The other road travelled by Talese takes him not towards images of sex but to the commercially available "real thing," be it offered for \$20 in a massage parlor or for considerably more (and with more trimmings) at Sandstone, the "utopian" sexual community in Topanga, Calif. Talese worked as a volunteer receptionist at a massage parlor, and gives us the impression that the job of masseuse is not oppressive to the women, allowing for flexible hours and conversation among the employees be-

tween appointments. As for Sandstone, I found Talese much more skimpy on what goes on there than Dan Greenberg in his 1977 *Playboy* article.

It is tempting to say that the whole system of sexual provisions that Talese discusses is rigged in favor of men. Yet his intention is to talk about a system that is rigged against sexuality altogether. But there is a blind spot in this vision, and the French theorist Michel Foucault

Gay Talese



has put his finger on it. Foucault believes that sexuality in the modern world is controlled not by its repression but by its "deployment," that is, by being endlessly depicted in the confessional and the "adult" bookstore, on the analyst's couch and on the film clips in Show World on 42nd Street. Sexuality is an avenue along which power travels. We cannot talk about one without the other.

The power struggle, according to Talese, is really between parents and kids, not between the men and women, who, in Talese's vision, join together (as in the Greek creation myth) to off mom and dad. It has been observed by reviewers that most of his characters share with the author repressive Chicago childhoods full of cold winters and absent fathers. Freedom from all this is imaged in the man to whom Talese gives his highest praise, a man who "could make love as casually and quickly as he could swim the length of a pool—which is not to denigrate his fondness for the women who shared his bed, but rather to suggest that sexual intercourse for him was not a clinging complicated act of commitment. It was an indulgence of pure pleasure, a healthy exercise that relieved tension and produced a delightful sense of being alive. Kennedy was—as D.H. Lawrence might have described him, a phallic President." Heir from birth to the power that alone can remove the scars of adolescence, Kennedy does "naturally" those things which Talese's other sexual overreachers must unremittingly struggle to achieve. But not all of us want to be a phallic president when we grow up.

Talese could hardly provide a better example of the thesis of Batya Weinbaum's *The Curious Courtship of Socialism and Feminism*: that the sons make a revolution to overthrow the fathers, only to establish a rule that leaves the women out once more. Talese's is a revolution of men against men: Samuel Roth against Anthony Comstock, William Hamling against the all male Supreme Court. The idea that powerless groups like women and gay people could form the cutting edge of a different kind of revolution is outside his political perspective.

The omission of the gay rights struggle from a discussion of the real sexual revolution of the last decade is a distortion that mars the whole. Straight men now carry pocketbooks and blow-dry their hair. Who pushed those changes upward into the dominant culture? Who put forth the idea, now widely discussed in magazines from *Penthouse* to *Family Circle*, that women experience more and better orgasms without the aid of a male sexual organ than with it? Hint: it wasn't Masters and Johnson.

A book that claims to be "about the men and women who shaped our sexual revolution" cannot afford to leave out those of us for whom John Fitzgerald Kennedy cannot be a sexual role model. I would venture to bet that *The Hite Report* has done more to increase the critical mass of orgasmic energy in this part of the world than all the "good guys" in *Thy Neighbor's Wife* combined. Of course a socialist feminist movement wants more than just more. It wants to overhaul the whole distribution system.

SNOOPERS

Keeping private lives private

The Politics of Privacy
By James Rule, Douglas McAdam, Linda Stearns and David Uglow
New American Library, \$2.50 paperback, 189 pages

By Elisabeth Lasch

As personal record-keeping converted from manual to computerized procedures, organizational surveillance and control over the destiny of individuals got way out of hand. From the CIA and the FBI to the IRS and VISA, national agencies greeted with open arms the emergence of privacy as a political issue in the late '60s and throughout the '70s. They intentionally misinterpreted calls for measures protecting privacy. In response to lists of injuries suffered by individuals at the hands of organizations that grossly misused personal information, planners of data gathering and filing systems recognize only a need for "procedural reform."

In *Politics of Privacy*, out of an unnecessary mishmash of jargon and the definition and italicizing of well-known words (like "surveillance," "social control" and "aesthetic") emerges a clear understanding of the utter bankruptcy of purported efforts to curb infringements on privacy. The book argues that attempts at reform from within organizations are no more than a search for more efficient and expedient methods of gathering informa-

tion. Reform only means the institution of "the efficiency criterion," which demands "that personal data be kept accurate, complete, and up to date; that openly promulgated rules of 'the process' govern the workings of data systems, including the decision-making based on the data; that organizations collect and use personal data only as [much as] necessary to attain 'legitimate organizational goals'; and that the people described in data files have the right to monitor and contest adherence to these principles." This blanket of protection smothers individual cries for privacy and lulls people into divulging their innermost secrets. Bureaucratic organizations claim that they want to protect privacy; how coincidental that to do so they need more information than ever.

Critics like writer Alan Westin further rather than correct the "official response" to institutional surveillance over private life. In *Privacy and Freedom*, 1967, he writes that "provisions for confidentiality of information, restrictions on improper circulation and sanctions against unauthorized use should be written into the basic legislative and administrative rules." The authors of *The Politics of Privacy* fault Westin and other critics, like Arthur R. Miller (author of *The Assault on Privacy*, 1971), for failing to see possible repressive ends of allegedly protective means.

Data collectors, their critics

and governmental overseers like the Privacy Protection Commission set up under the Privacy Act of 1971 and the courts all treat abridgements of privacy as grotesque aberrations in a system that merely lacks judicious handling and curtailment of data gathering activities. They "find nothing worrisome about growth in the use of personal information by organizations."

The book skims over the development of computerized methods of centralizing and pooling personal records, analyzing the motives for reform measures that have left untouched the intrusive nature of inquiry into private matters supposedly necessary for income tax, insurance, social security, welfare, consumer credit and the like.

It is opportunism that motivates these agencies and renders them unable to acknowledge what the authors call "aesthetic satisfaction in keeping private spheres private." To cut spending to the ultimate low, eligibility requirements for most public welfare, unemployment benefits and public liability insurance involve "close surveillance of recipients' lives, ranging from requirements of personal documentation to unannounced visits to recipients' homes."

Credit systems collect vast pools of personal information to reach an accurate prediction of which clients should be trusted and to what extent. And in the case of insurance, "wishing to avoid heavy court judgments against the people they insure, companies either decline business from persons reported to be disreputable, or accept it at higher rates than otherwise."

In the interests of self-preservation and perpetuation, companies devise surveillance to "reinforce community prejudice." Pooling and maintaining

permanent records allow social agencies to reject or keep a close eye on any potential risk. So services indispensable to the modern American have become means of discriminating against unreliable citizens (those who do not pay off).

The authors, though too cool and level-headed about it, unearth the almost entrepreneurial motive for amassing personal information that lies behind super-

ficial protections of privacy.

The last chapters leave a gratifying vision of a "looser, more private world," in which social service organizations absorb the extra cost—a minuscule cost considering the gain—of taking on potentially risky clients and doing away with extensive record-keeping, in return for the infinitely more important goals of giving every person a clean slate and a private life.

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ART & ENTERTAINMENT

BOOKS



An immigrant mother with her children just arrived in the U.S.

Price of independence for an 1890s immigrant

The Open Cage, An Anzia Yezierska Collection
Selected and with an introduction by Alice Kessler-Harris, Afterward by Louise Levitas Henriksen
Persea (225 Lafayette St., NYC 10012), \$12.95 (\$4.95, paper)

By Rachel Kranz

Anzia Yezierska was an Eastern European Jewish immigrant who arrived in the U.S. in the 1890s. She was expected to bring home money to support her father's religious studies, but, like

the characters of whom she writes, she rebelled. At 17 she left home to work in sweatshops and laundries until she could earn enough money to pay for English lessons.

Her checkered writing career spanned the early success of her first book's sale to Hollywood in 1920, her dissatisfaction and return to the East, prolific writing throughout the '20s, and a long silence in the '30s and '40s as she reevaluated her work in light of the changes in her immigrant community. She began to publish again in the '50s.

Later, aged and poverty-stricken, she nonetheless wrote that she had found "this quiet joy, this sanctuary...waiting for me after I sank back to anonymity."

Until Persea Books re-issued *The Bread Givers* in 1975, Yezierska's name had been consigned to the oblivion that awaits many women, working-class, and "primitive" writers. Persea's recent publication of *The Open Cage*, a collection of short stories and other works, contains writing from throughout Yezierska's career.

Yezierska cast her early tales in a primitive, almost naive voice. Her young heroines, forced to work in shops and sweatshops to maintain their struggling families, cry out for "my chance to give what I had to give." "I want to make myself for a person," they repeat, puzzled that the "beautiful America" to which they have come is even more confining than the villages of Eastern Europe.

The language is rich in metaphor and fresh in observation: "We're packed like herring in a barrel, but there's always room for a push-in of a few more," one character exclaims. Although the words are ostensibly English, they are in fact a direct translation of Yiddish.

The "primitive" quality is deceptive, however. By the time she began to write, Yezierska was better educated and shrewder than her autobiographical

heroines. Her "primitivism" can thus be seen as a conscious choice. Critic John Berger aptly observes that "the will of primitives derives from a faith in their own experience and a profound skepticism about society as they have found it." In tale after tale, Yezierska reiterates what was once her own story: the young immigrant, at first bewitched by the promise of America, grows disillusioned by its failure to fulfill that promise. Many of the stories end with the shock of that recognition; many more end with some apparent bridging of the gap—a renewed faith in a forthcoming education, an American-born Jewish lover who will help the heroine fit into America while appreciating her immigrant vitality.

But Yezierska is most effective when she allows the contradictory gap to remain unbridged. As the immigrant children of the '20s became successful, what was to become of their parents? What became of their own relationship to the world of push-carts and sweatshops, the closely knit but often oppressive religious patriarchy in which they had grown up?

Yezierska spent her life struggling with this contradiction. Success and her move to Hollywood meant on the one hand a break with her father, the Old World patriarch who had always disapproved of her writing. But her writing was likewise not understood by Hollywood luminaries, and Yezierska, fleeing Hester Street, found Hollywood only "the fish market in evening clothes."

Stories in *The Open Cage* focus on such contradictions. "Children of Loneliness" is the story of an immigrant daughter, Rachel, newly returned from American college. Unable to bear the filth and confinement of her parents' Hester Street flat, she leaves home once again.

Modern readers will applaud Rachel's wish for privacy and independence; they may be less sympathetic to her contempt for her parents' table manners. But Rachel herself realizes that she can't maintain the independence without the contempt. In a moving scene, she returns again to her parents' house, but is unable to face them. Hiding on the fire escape, she watches her mother's patient servitude, is struck by her father's age and illness. Yet she knows that if she succumbs to these soft feelings she would finally have to return home, giving up her dream of self-expression.

Rachel attempts a solution which worked for previous Yezierska heroines—an American-born lover. When Rachel dines with Frank Baker, a budding social worker whom she knew at college, she finds him enraptured with the "quaint" culture of the Lower East Side.

"This very afternoon," Frank rhapsodizes, "I came upon a dear old man who peered up at me through horn-rimmed glasses behind his pile of Hebrew books. He was hardly able to speak English, but I found him a great scholar..."

"...Rachel's voice was hard with bitterness. 'Did you see his wife? I'll bet she was slaving for him in the kitchen. And his children slaving for him in the sweatshop.'"

Rachel hopes that an American husband will give her a place in American society, although she envies the American girls who "belonging to the world in which they are born...are human even without a man's love." But she finds that her lover's acceptance comes at the expense of

her immigrant roots, just as a return to her parents comes at the expense of her American dreams.

"*Fat of the Land*" tells a similar story from the parent's point of view. Yezierska plays shrewdly on our desire to sympathize with Hannah Breineh, a careworn mother of six. Yes, Hannah is worn to the bone with worry, but must she hit her children? Must she complain to them that one or two should better die, so she would *takkeh* have enough food for herself? At once comic and horrifying, sympathetic and repugnant, Hannah Breineh achieves the kind of vicious vitality of the survivor displayed in Ettore Scola's film, *Down and Dirty*. She is living proof of Shaw's comment that the deadliest of the seven deadly sins is poverty.

Years later we rejoin Hannah, whose children have now become successful—a landlord, a factory owner, a playwright—a mother's golden dreams. But the children are ashamed of Hannah—she eats with her fingers, bothers the servants, speaks with an accent—and Hannah herself is bored with posh Riverside Drive. She tries to return to Hester Street to live with a former neighbor. But she has forgotten that the homes of the poor are cold, smelly, and infested with roaches. Neither world welcomes her any longer.

Yezierska's stories of immigrant children coincide with the disintegration of the immigrant culture. Jewish leftists of the '30s like Mike Gold and Joseph Freeman focused on the monumental social events that they thought would subsume all ethnic groups into common struggle. In their hope of collective action to replace the old ethnic solidarity, they could afford to forgive history its inevitable human casualties. But Yezierska had written, "My idea of success was to be wholly myself." For her, resolution of the historical conflict was necessary on a personal level as well; thus, in a contradictory age, her solutions were even contradictory. Her stories bring to mind Tillie Olsen's image of the animal that gnaws off its paw to escape from a trap, only to find itself crippled in its freedom.

The Open Case conveys the vitality of a community long dead. Especially for the grandchildren of that community, it is a work in which the past illuminates the present.

Rachel Kranz is a Boston writer.

A garment worker carrying a load to work on at home.



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By David Talbot

RENEWABLE ENERGY, ONCE regarded as a diversion for moneyed eccentrics, is rapidly gaining favor in low-income minority communities throughout the country. Minority organizations are looking to the sun as a way to create jobs, stem the flow of dollars from the ghettos and barrios to energy corporations, and foster a sense of pride and self-sufficiency.

•The West Side Community Development Corporation, located in San Bernardino California's impoverished black community, has trained more than 600 CETA workers since 1974 to rehabilitate houses and manufacture and install solar heating equipment. The CDC's young trainees will soon begin constructing a 150,000-square-foot light manufacturing plant, powered by a 35-kilowatt photovoltaic system, which the organization claims will be "the largest industrial application of solar electricity in the country."

•The Indian Development District of Arizona began a solar training program last year for men and women from nine tribes. The trainees, who call themselves "The Arizona Solar Savages," have installed solar hot water systems free of charge in the homes of low-income and elderly Indians throughout the state. The solar system, which is manufactured by a Navajo-owned and operated enterprise, provides 80 percent of a home's hot water needs, saving tribal families an average of \$336 yearly in fuel costs.

•Crystal City, a poor Chicano community in south Texas, was forced to develop its local renewable energy resources when its natural gas supply was cut off in 1977. The city is now in the process of creating a municipal solar utility that will manufacture, install, and maintain low-cost solar water heaters, manage the gathering of mesquite wood for the city's wood-burning stoves, and oversee the production of fuel alcohol.

•The Bronx Frontier Development Corporation, dedicated to "the greening of the South Bronx," recently erected a 40-kilowatt windmill that powers its office lights as well as the composting equipment for its community gardens.

Link.

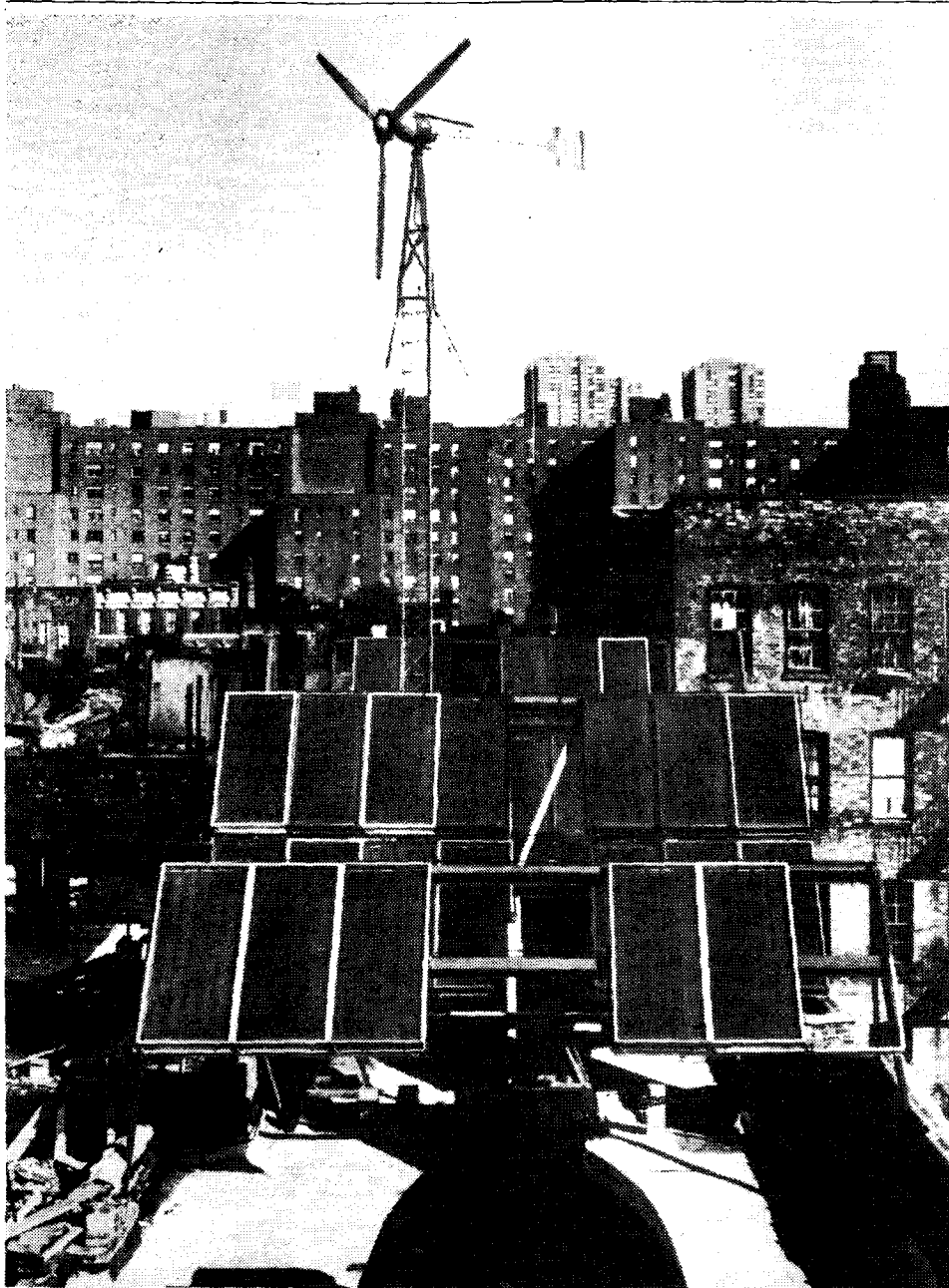
Representatives from these and dozens of other similar projects gathered recently at a San Bernadino conference sponsored by Minorities Organized for Renewable Energy (MORE), a national coalition that has forged a crucial link between the solar movement and non-white communities. Veteran poverty fighters from America's withering urban core and socially-concerned practitioners of appropriate technology mingled at the three-day series of workshops and strategy sessions and spoke enthusiastically of the redemptive powers of the sun. Renewable energy, said conference participants, provides more jobs than high-technology, capital-intensive forms of energy production; it provides a range of training opportunities in carpentry, sheetmetal work, plumbing and other skilled trades; and it creates jobs in existing population centers rather than in the wilds of Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado.

"It's madness," said an activist from Washington, D.C., "to take an electrician from Detroit and send him a thousand miles away to work on a synthetic fuel plant, when you could put him and hundreds like him to work where he lives, retrofitting buildings and making Detroit more energy-efficient."

Others spoke of the unique entrepreneurial opportunities in solar energy. Solar manufacturing does not require prohibitive amounts of capital, the technology is relatively uncomplicated, and the industry is not yet tightly structured. "We can't build a nuclear plant or drill and oil well," said Valerie Pope Ludlum, president of the San Bernardino West Side Community Development Corporation and a prime mover behind the MORE conference. "But we can provide the community with solar power. Solar is a new opportunity for us to participate in the American Dream."

LIFE IN THE U.S.

SUN POWER



Solar energy sources like these in New York are gaining in popularity among the poor.

Renewable energy builds self-reliance

"People's lives are controlled by a handful of huge institutions," Pope continued. "We need to develop a feeling of independence, of self-determination. Solar can be a way to do that. Building a solar greenhouse to grow healthy food or installing a solar water heater to cut the monthly utility bill can give people a sense of power."

"You should see the faces of these kids, our CETA trainees, after they've completed a project. 'I put that collector on that house,' they'll say, you know, grinning from ear to ear. That kind of thing makes your day."

Opposition.

Of course not all sectors of the minority community have embraced renewable energy. Some minority activists regard it as a primitive technology that will simply reinforce their community's underdeveloped status. For this reason, some La Raza Unida politicians in Crystal City initially opposed the installation of wood stoves in local homes by the Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems, a non-profit appropriate technology firm based in Austin, Texas.

"One of our major accomplishments is that we're gringos working in south Texas—that's a miracle in itself," said the firm's co-director, Pliny Fisk, whose work in Crystal City and other Chicano communities has given renewable energy a good name. The small solar factory that Fisk's firm constructed in Crystal City will be turned over to the community to form the basis of its municipal solar utility.

"Many Chicanos and Indians are turned off to solar because they still think of it as a hippie movement," said

Lita Rivera, a solar activist from Santa Fe, N.M. Rivera runs a solar training program that emphasizes the historical role solar energy played in Hispanic and Indian cultures in the Southwest. "We talk about how our architecture, our sense of time, our way of life was built around the sun. Indians were utilizing advanced solar concepts centuries ago."

Some minority organizations ultimately connected to the energy industry have adopted positions on solar power that conform with the prevailing corporate wisdom.

"Solar is going to work itself into the nation's energy mix," said Rufus McKinney, a gas utility executive who serves as chairman of the American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE). "But it's a supplemental source—it cannot power the primary industries." McKinney contends that economic growth—"which means more jobs for minorities"—can only be sustained with conventional energy systems. "Minorities lose when the economic pie stops expanding. The way to promote economic growth is by expanding the energy supply, rather than rationing our diminishing resources."

Oil opinion.

Robert Bates Jr., a Mobil Oil lobbyist who helped write the NAACP's pro-industry energy policy last year, concedes that the direct employment effects of solar energy may be greater than conventional forms of energy. But he believes that national energy policy should not be linked to job development. "Our energy program should not be designed to give poor people jobs," Bates remarked. "The nation's energy program and its poverty program cannot be tied together. The way out of poverty is to get a job."

But the main barrier to renewable energy in the minority community is financial, not ideological. Even highly successful enterprises like the San Bernardino West Side Community Development Corporation are almost entirely dependent on government funding. "It is simply impossible to generate enough income in a depressed community like this to become self-supporting," said CDC president Ludlum. "Grumman and Jet Propulsion are not self-supporting, so why should we be expected to be?"

Despite the CDC's glowing reputation, Pope says it is still a struggle to win government contracts and grants. "We have to keep running just to stay in place. It doesn't seem to get any easier. Some government officials seem to believe that if you've been involved in solar training programs in the past, you shouldn't be eligible for any more money."

Some minority groups have begun to approach utility companies for funding. Under federal law utilities must soon begin offering energy audits to their residential customers. The National Urban League would like utilities to hire unemployed minorities to carry out these energy audits.

Urban League officials recently discussed the idea with Rufus McKinney, who besides chairing AABE serves as the Southern California Gas Company's corporate representative in Washington, D.C. McKinney did not give the proposal his stamp of approval. In a revealing in-

Continued on page 23.

CIRCULATION GROWTH



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Women

Continued from page 13.

women as such, except for pregnant women (who enjoy considerable protection under French law, notably from being fired). For instance, if loads prove too heavy for women, as happened when the postal service took on its first women letter carriers, then loads should be reduced for men as well.

The CFDT is obviously hostile to such demands as "Wages for housework" formulated by Italian *autonomia* theorists (with some echoes in North America) who support all demands, however incoherent or even contradictory, that express "needs" on the theory that "to each according to his or her needs" is the direct route to communism. The concern to formulate demands that meet real needs but without reinforcing conventional sex roles has led to sharp debates within the organization, for instance on the question of allocations, not, certainly, for housework ("the community is not going to pay to provide a man with his private maid"), but for mothers who stay at home to care for children. The CFDT rejected the "maternal salary" as extremely dangerous and unfair, since it would incite women to stay home and maintain an attitude of dependence, while penalizing women with children who work. The alternative solution envisaged by the CFDT is an allocation to cover expenses of each child, to be paid to whichever parent, father or mother (or any other guardian) takes childraising responsibility, whether or not he or she works. The idea is that society should assume a share of responsibility for all children, but not for perpetuating certain domestic arrangements.

This policy provides guidelines for transitional demands leading from the French welfare state as it exists today toward the sort of democratic socialism envisaged by CFDT leaders. Meanwhile, nobody denies that there is plenty of work to be done merely to overcome blatant sexism and macho attitudes within

the ranks of the CFDT itself. In the CFDT view, class struggle and women's liberation do not naturally coincide—far from it. Bringing them together requires a long deliberate effort guided by a long range socialist vision.

For the time being, the CFDT advocates affirmative action to attain job mixity, and urges women to make greater use than they have so far of the existing legislation banning job discrimination. In addition to the French laws, CFDT women want to start trying to enforce the 1976 European Community

directive on equal treatment between men and women, which goes even further. The directive, which European member states agreed to implement within 30 months, calls for measures to end all discrimination based on sex, either directly or indirectly, by reference to matrimonial or family situation, and to provide not only for equal pay but for equal access to jobs, training, orientation, promotion, and professional recycling. The directive specifies that it does not stand in the way of any measures concerning protection of women, notably

in any aspect of childbearing, nor of any affirmative action measure taken to remedy existing inequalities of opportunity.

Within this context, a simple demand being put forth by the CFDT is to schedule all adult education courses sponsored by employers to improve employees' chances of advancement within normal working hours, since experience shows that few women are free to go out at night. For the same reason, the union must fight harder for the right to hold its own meetings at the work-place and during work hours.

Home

Continued from page 13.

produce a "second peak" of labor market participation, after young unmarried women.

Finally, in a fourth group comprising the Scandinavian countries, France, Belgium, the U.S. and Canada, the relationship between women's wages and child care costs has now changed so that many, if not most women no longer quit working when they have children. Either well-educated young mothers now can earn enough to afford child care or else the state provides it.

There are a couple of exceptions. In Finland women have gone straight from the fields to the factories, with no period of inactivity. In Holland, on the contrary, even childless married women are still encouraged to stay home or work only part time. Elsewhere, the pattern holds.

Of OECD countries, Sweden has the highest percentage of working women, with 70 percent of the female population gainfully employed, 43 percent of the nation's labor force. Only about a third of the women go to work in Holland, on the contrary, even childless married women are still encouraged to stay home or work only part-time. Elsewhere, the pattern holds.

American women are relatively badly paid. According to the most recent

available data, in the U.S. the average working woman earns 66 percent of average male wages, compared to 87 percent in Sweden and 86 percent in France. In Canada, the figure is only 50 percent—the biggest discrepancy of any OECD country.

Danish Labor Minister Svend Auken, who chaired the conference, stressed that women have entered the labor force for good, although he acknowledged the "immense appeal" of the idea that current social problems could be solved by sending married women back home to take care of their children and parents. This "nostalgic thinking" was both wrong and highly unrealistic, he said. He argued that women's gainful employment was increasingly necessary (1) to the economy especially with the dropping birthrate, and (2) to family income, especially (although he did not put it quite so bluntly) with dropping wages.

Greater employment of women offers a way to increase household revenue and thus consumer demand without raising wages—or even while lowering them, as

is currently being done with the help of inflation. Women's increasing participation in the regular labor force is necessary to support the social security system and pension funds in countries like France, with major welfare state programs, stable or declining birthrate and a very large retired population.

Current rising unemployment among women was seen as conjunctural rather than a reversal of the general trend. The major concern at the OECD conference was sex segregation on the labor market and ways to combat it. Management, represented by the Business and Industry Advisory Committee, passed the buck, blaming schools and social attitudes. Its suggested remedies were parttime work and flexible hours for women—both regarded with suspicion and hostility by labor as union-busting devices. The Trade Union Advisory Committee seemed worried about tendencies to promote competition between men and women on a shrinking job market instead of working up measures to end the current recession and ensure full employment.

—D.J.

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for two insertions and \$10.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Bill Rehm.

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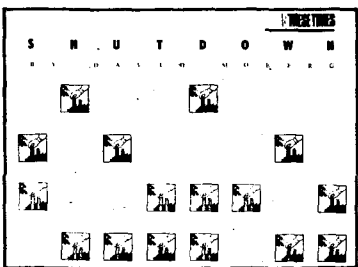
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POLITICS AND ECONOMICS OF ENERGY IN THE '80S will be the major theme of the annual SUMMER CONFERENCE OF THE UNION FOR RADICAL POLITICAL ECONOMICS on the University of California campus at Santa Cruz. People planning to sleep in the campus accommodations must pre-register. Write or call URPE, Room 901, 41 Union Square West, NY, NY 10003; (212)691-5722. Best day for one day's attendance will be Sunday, Aug. 24. Day care provided.

IN THESE TIMES

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DIRECTORY

The Directory is published to facilitate contact with organizations frequently referred to in the pages of *In These Times*. Each organization has paid a fee for its listing.

Citizens Energy Project
1110 6th Street, NW, #300
Washington, DC 20001

The Citizens Party-National Office
525 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

The Citizens Party of Illinois
109 N. Dearborn, Suite 603
Chicago, IL 60602
(312) 322-2066

Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy
120 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, DC 20002

C.O.I.N.-Consumers Opposed to Inflation in the Necessities
2000 P Street, N.W.
Suite 413
Washington, DC 20036

DSOC-Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee
853 Broadway, Room 801
New York, NY 10003

Midwest Academy
600 West Fullerton Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614

National Center for Economic Alternatives
2000 P Street, N.W.
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

NAM-New American Movement
3244 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60657

New Patriot Alliance
343 S. Dearborn, Room 305
Chicago, IL 60604

Socialist Party, U.S.A.
Suite 325
135 W. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Working Women
1258 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44111

Solar

Continued from page 21.

interview in his Washington office, the utility executive explained why he has reservations about the plan:

"Being a minority myself, I've got to be philosophically in favor of it—but there are security and trust problems if you use CETA-type workers. A utility's image is on the line when one of its employees enters a customer's house. When a utility auditor

knocks on the door, the homeowner doesn't want a rapist standing there. We care a whole lot about who is going to be our representative when it comes to direct customer contacts.

"There is also the problem of competency—performing energy audits is not unskilled work. It requires some engineering and mathematical knowledge—you don't just recruit high school dropouts to do that sort of thing. When we send somebody out to do an audit, we have to stand behind their work. Some training programs haven't worked out very well."

At least one other institution

in the minority community could play a key role in the development of solar energy and conservation—the church. "Churches have been overlooked, but they have a mass constituency, a resource base, and lots of property," said Lenneal Henderson Jr., a Howard University professor who has written extensively about energy and social equity. "They are a natural place to build demonstration solar projects. And those old, drafty buildings desperately need to be weatherized. Churches can make solar energy more visible in the community, they can play a vanguard role. The money in their

coffers is also unencumbered by the restraints of government and private industry—it comes directly from the congregation—and it can be used to finance other solar projects in the community."

As dozens of minority solar projects have demonstrated, the sun's power *can* be used to revive dying inner cities and dirt-poor rural communities. Solar energy *can* be linked with economic development. But current federal energy policy, which is skewed toward extravagant corporate-controlled technologies, fails to make this connection.

"We're at a crossroads in our economic history," Earl Craig Jr., president of the Urban Coalition of Minneapolis, recently remarked. "We will be moving one way or the other in determining who controls our nation's wealth. The gap between rich and poor will be either widened or narrowed depending on the energy policy we formulate. It is in our society's best interests to couple energy policy with social equity concerns. If we try to separate the two, we won't get at the problem of structural poverty, and everybody—including the upper classes—will ultimately lose." ■

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NATIONAL ORGANIZING CONFERENCE: NEW JEWISH AGENDA —Dec. 24-28, 1980. Build progressive, grass-roots organization that seeks to apply Jewish values to political and social issues in general and Jewish communities. Agenda. P.O. Box 320, NYC 10025.

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Whiter shades of pale

By T.D. Allman

"DON'T SEE WHY THIS CITY always has to be run by fair-skinned, blue-eyed people," the first Atlanta voter said. "It's time to elect one of us."

"You'd think you'd have to be a northerner with a Harvard Ph.D. to get anywhere in Atlanta," the second voter observed. "I'm tired of outsiders coming in, thinking they can run the place."

Both men, not just the first, were black—Georgia-born construction workers employed in building the city's new



mass transit system. And in spite of the references to blue eyes and Harvard degrees, they weren't talking about whites. They were venting their irritation at this city's black elite, which for decades has been the home base of some of the country's most famous blacks: Martin Luther King Jr., Julian Bond, Maynard Jackson, Andrew Young and many others.

The first voter was referring to color prejudice—not white prejudice against blacks, but discrimination on the basis of skin color of black against black, between the fair-skinned and the dark.

The second was mentioning another growing cleavage within black America—class divisions among blacks at a time when both affirmative action and the decline in basic social services are creating a dangerous distance between the minority of blacks who have achieved middle-class status and the majority who have not.

Almost all blacks—whether wealthy officials or unemployed street kids—agree that color consciousness and socioeconomic status are far more serious factors in relationships between white and black Americans than they are in determining how blacks relate to each other.



And today dark skin is not the almost insurmountable obstacle to success in black society that it once was.

Still, New Orleans city councilman Sidney Barthelemy, himself a fair-skinned product of New Orleans' creole elite, recently observed, "Color consciousness among blacks is a reality, especially in southern cities like New Orleans that have had stable black elites, mostly fair-skinned, for a long time."

Passing.

A northerner meeting dozens of black officials in the South, in fact, is struck by how many of them are either fair-skinned or of high social and educational status, or both. New Orleans Mayor Ernest Morial, a former judge, is so fair-skinned that whites who are unaware who he is frequently assume he is white. At times Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson has called himself "the biggest, blackest mayor in America." In fact, Jackson is a scion of Atlanta's traditional elite. He might be mistaken for a Corsican in France or a Turk in the Mideast, or a white American at a New York cocktail party if, as one of the mayor's friends put it, "Maynard ever let any doubt arise about exactly who and what he is, which he never has, and never will."

Dark-skinned blacks who have grown up in poverty often complain that other blacks discriminate, whether consciously or not, on grounds of complexion and status. "I'm a sharecropper's son who didn't see a flush toilet until I was six," one prominent Georgian said. "And Mayor Jackson, I presume unintentionally, has created the impression that in this city you have to have a genteel background to get an important position. He should have appointed a black cop who'd come up through the ranks, and he wouldn't have all these problems with the police today."

But the color question can also cut the other way, with fair-skinned blacks complaining that their complexion hurts them with the black electorate. In New Orleans, most people, black and white, believe Mayor Morial served as a "Caucasian," not as a "Negro," in the U.S. armed forces back when the government still used such labels. And, in an obvious attempt to hurt his credibility with the voters, both black and white critics pri-

Does how black you are now get you where you are?

vately accuse Morial of "passing" on many more occasions than that.

Have blacks really discriminated against each other on the basis of color? Do they still discriminate on those grounds?

"It certainly happened a lot in the past," says Julian Bond, member of a distinguished family and whose father was a university president. "I remember when I was a kid in New Orleans, they'd have 'paper bag parties.' A grocery bag was put over the light outside a house where there was a party. If your skin was darker than the bag with the light shining through it, you were not welcome."

"I would have thought all that was finished," the Georgia state senator added, "but it clearly isn't."

"The tragedy of racism in America," says Lewis White, a Birmingham broadcaster, "wasn't just that it made so many whites bigots. It infected how blacks viewed themselves. The whiter you were, the better you were."

New leadership.

But that phase in southern political history may be coming to an end. While power today rests largely where it has for decades—in the hands of fair-skinned sons of the "respectable" black establishment—a new leadership is beginning to emerge. Black voters are turning to candidates who are as black as they are, and whose origins speak to their common experience.

Many observers believe that this shift played a central role in the hard-fought election for the city council presidency of Atlanta in February. The campaign pitted two impressive, young Georgia black politicians against each other for the city's second highest electoral office. The initial favorite was Michael Lomax, a protege of Maynard Jackson whom the mayor had brought to Atlanta from California to fill a high appointive office. A graduate of Atlanta's prestigious Stillman College and the winner of a doctoral degree from Berkeley, Lomax entered the race with the reputation as the wonder boy of Atlanta politics.

His opponent made the contest a study in contrasts in black America in the post-segregation era of black power at the polls. An ex-football star nicknamed "Bowlegs" who attended Atlanta's less prestigious Clark College, and then Emory Law School, Marvin Arrington—as he emphasized during the campaign—was a self-made man raised in a public housing project.

In a city where both blacks and whites like to believe they inhabit a sophisticated, world-class metropolis that has left its

old South provincialism behind, Lomax embodied everything the new Atlanta believes will make up its future. Arrington supposedly personified a rough-hewn, almost embarrassingly unpolished past.

But things did not turn out that way. Arrington not only swept the black precincts on the run-off day, he also did far better than expected among white voters. "It couldn't have been planned," a middle-class, middle-aged white Atlantan said the day before the election. "Somehow Arrington has wound up representing all the things both blacks and whites in Atlanta know or at least like to believe they are—upwardly mobile, but not ashamed of what they once were."

Another Atlantan called the result "a sign of black political maturity. There's always been this tendency to elect blacks who can fit in with whites, who have degrees from prestigious white universities, who talk like white people," he said. "Now it's different. We can elect black people like us, and we don't have to be ashamed of it."

What does the Atlanta city council president election bode for black politics in other cities? At this point, the long-term political meaning of the new voting pattern remains uncertain. Humble origins notwithstanding, Atlanta's Marvin Arrington supports the same basically moderate-to-conservative policies that almost all southern politicians of both races do.

"More and more blacks are making it, whatever their complexion or background," comments Louisiana state senator Hank Braden. "But the real problem is that millions and millions of other blacks are still being left behind." ■

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